



Evangelism
Sowing and Reaping

By
James G. Poitras

Evangelism

Lesson One

Evangelism and Farming

“Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest” (Matthew 9:37-38).

FOCUS: God is interested in farming. Explain how it parallels to evangelism.

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

In the Old Testament God established His interest in farming, the oldest recorded profession. The first man and woman, Adam and Eve, were placed in the Garden of Eden (a farm) and were told, “work it and take care of it” (Genesis 2:15 *NIV*). Because Adam listened to his wife and ate the forbidden fruit, the ground was cursed. He continued to farm through agonizing toil and sweat. Even though they had sinned, their responsibility for farming continued.

God has always been involved in a harvest. He is the “Lord of the harvest” (Matthew 9:38). The Lord alone is in charge of His harvest (1 Corinthians 3:6-7). His people are merely seed sowers (farm hands).

We look forward to hearing Him say on judgment day, “You were a good farmer!” Well, not exactly, but we do want to hear, “Well done!”

“The greatest Farmer the world has ever known is pursuing the greatest harvest the world has ever seen.”
(Dutch Sheets in *The River of God*)

The Israelites were people of the land. Canaan was their inheritance. The children of God were repeatedly told to “possess the land” (Deuteronomy 3:20). Each family received their portion. It was their property, never to be sold, always preserved. As evangelists we have been given the land—our village, community, or city. The land is ours! We must possess it.

Jesus ministered to an agriculturally oriented society. Most citizens were rural people. Even those who lived in cities kept farms outside of the city walls. They knew what it meant to work the land.

Life depended on what could be grown. The essentials of life came from the land including food, clothing, and shelter. Daily life revolved around the needs of the land. The daily life of the church revolves around our first priority, reaching the unreached. We have everything it takes to reach them. We have the Bible, and it has the answer for every question. Old methods of farming will always work. The old-time religion found in God’s Word still works in reaping a harvest.

Farming is important to survival. Farmers make up forty-eight percent of the world’s labor force. Sixty percent of Africans farm, and sixty-one percent of Asians. “Despite the expansion of commerce and industry and the importance of these activities to the economy, most Africans remain farmers and herders.” (*Encarta Encyclopedia 2000 CDROM*)



Through farming, food is provided for the population so that life goes on. With a harvest of souls the church will not only survive, but its future will be secured.

In the early days farming was a cooperative effort. Oxen and a plow were passed from one field to another.

Farming was so important to the children of God that religious life revolved around four major feasts or celebrations. According to Dale Rumble in *Behold the Harvest* several of these celebrations were shadows of future spiritual harvests to be enjoyed by the church.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread reminded God's people that they had been set apart from Egypt and were not to be a part of a sinful nation. Jesus is our Bread of Life.

The Feast of the Passover reminded God's people of their deliverance from bondage. It was fulfilled in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The Feast of Pentecost was celebrated when the wheat was ripe for cutting. It was fulfilled by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4). This feast pointed to the day that God would reap the harvest.

The Feast of Tabernacles will conclude the time of spiritual harvest with a final gathering of souls bringing His return.

God promised to pour out His Spirit on all flesh (Joel 2:28-29). This is likened to the early and latter rains, which brought the crops to harvest. Farmers count on God to send rain. Without the rains coming at the right time, crops dwindle and die. There has to be a right climate for crops to grow.

2. Why were Adam and Eve placed in the Garden of Eden?

3. Who is in charge of the harvest?

4. Comment on God's people being a people of the land.

5. What percentage of Africa farm?_____

6. What percentage of the world's labor force are farmers?_____

7. What does a harvest of souls tell us about the future of the church?

8. Old Testament religious life revolved around four major feasts? What were they?

9. What were these celebrations a shadow of?

10. What did the Feast of Pentecost represent?

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. What is the oldest recorded profession?_____

Evangelism

Lesson Two

Introducing the Farmers

"A farmer went out to sow his seed"
(Matthew 13:3, NIV).

FOCUS: Introduce the farmers that will assist us in our study of evangelism.

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

Rudyard Kipling in *Just So Stories* (1902)
"The Elephant's Child" said,

"I keep six honest serving-men
(They taught me all I knew).

Their names are, What and Why and When
And How and Where and Who."

We will be using six hard-working farmers
to assist us in our study of evangelism.

Their names are:

- ‡ What?
- ‡ Why?
- ‡ When?
- ‡ Where?
- ‡ How?
- ‡ Who?

Hopefully, by the time this course is completed, you will have shifted into being a powerful witness and evangelist for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Students in a first year Bible school class in Ghana came up with the following points concerning farmers. Use your imagination and see how these points relate to evangelism. Be aware; these points may surface again throughout this textbook.



A farmer:

- ‡ Always looks at seasons. He knows when to plant and when to harvest.
- ‡ Puts great value on his seeds because he knows the seeds he sows today determines the harvest he will reap tomorrow.
- ‡ Protects the plants from weeds, heat, insects, and animals.
- ‡ Values time. He knows how to work hard and use effective time management skills.
- ‡ Practices pruning, and watering.
- ‡ Is patient. He waits for the appropriate time to plant and harvest.
- ‡ Know when he is winning or losing.
- ‡ Plants but realizes that God gives the increase.
- ‡ Looks for the best, fertile land.
- ‡ Builds storehouses to keep the harvested crops.
- ‡ Knows the value of his crops.
- ‡ Realizes it takes time to prepare the land. He is longsuffering.
- ‡ Is not lazy.
- ‡ Inspects the crops to determine growth and progress.
- ‡ Does not know everything. He invites experts to help.
- ‡ Realizes farming is a family affair. Everyone is needed and included in the work.
- ‡ Is always looking for the right equipment and tools.

- † Depends on God for the rains.
- † Knows his fields.
- † Evaluates his harvest from season to season.
- † Never goes to the field without tools.
- † Is happy when it comes to the harvest.
- † Knows that without a harvest he has no future.
- † Always looks for new ideas.
- † Is always looking for workers to help in the fields.
- † Is change-oriented. He experiments with new methods.
- † Looks for buyers.
- † Plants a variety of seeds.
- † Knows that if he does not plant on the land somebody else will.

One African leader on the last night of his presidency said, "Tonight I go to bed a president and will wake up in the morning a farmer." He realized that he was returning to the basics of life as he left the presidency.

It is our hope that through studying this course on evangelism that, regardless of your walk in life, you will wake up to being a farmer in God's kingdom. It is a noble passion.

Farmers know that to reap an abundant crop they must sow their best.

John Wesley once said,

"Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as you can."

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. What are names of the six hard-working farmers that will assist us in our studies of evangelism?

2. List ten things you have learned concerning farmers in this lesson.

3. How do farmers get the most abundant crops?

4. What did one African leader say on his last night in presidency?

Evangelism

Lesson Three

Between Sowing and Reaping

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7).

FOCUS: Explain the law of sowing and reaping as it relates to evangelism.

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED



A common theme that runs throughout this book is the law of sowing and reaping. This is also known as the Law of the Harvest. God promised that what we sow, we shall reap. We cannot reap a harvest if we are not involved in sowing the seed. What you sow is what you get!

Robert Louis Stevenson once said, "Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds you plant."

"He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good" (Ecclesiastes 11:4, 6).

Our job is to sow the seed, despite the prevailing circumstances around us, and to leave the results up to God.

Ghana's first President, Kwame Nkrumah said, "I have sown the seed and indeed it will germinate." He understood the law of sowing and reaping.

A Look at the Scriptures

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7).

"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Corinthians 9:6).

"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11).

To reap a harvest we need:

- Seed (the Word of God),
- Soil (the unreached), and
- Sower (the evangelist or witness).

Farm life follows a cycle: early rains, fields plowed, seeds planted, crops cultivated, and finally harvested. Farmers are often uneducated, but they know how to get a harvest.



Seasons

Preparing the Soil	Prayer
Planting the Seed	God's Word
Cultivating (Watering)	1 Corinthians 3:5-6
Nurturing (Pull the Weeds)	Address doubts and questions. Continue to cultivate the relationship with the potential convert.
Harvest	Prospect is converted.
Process begins again	

Between sowing and reaping, there are many dangers—drought, dry winds, locusts or other bugs, weeds (tares/thorns), and theft by birds. In Bible times crops were protected by watchmen (Jeremiah 4:17). The need for watchmen increased as the time of harvest neared.

There cannot be reaping until sowing takes place. Someone must sow before another can reap.

When someone comes forward in an altar service, they bring a long history of soil being prepared and seeds being planted.

"And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours" (John 4:36-38).

Tim Downs in his *Discipleship Journal* article, "Sowing Circle," introduces four principles.

1. The labor of ministry includes both sowing and reaping.
2. The reaper's success depends on the work of the sower. "I sent you to reap what you have not worked for."
3. The sower has the harder job. "Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor." It takes one day to harvest what has been nurtured for months.
4. The sower and reaper work as a team. "The sower and the reaper may be glad together."

**"The fields tell the farmer what task is required for the day."
(Tim Downs, *Discipleship Journal*)**

The law of the harvest teaches us that:

- You reap later than you plant.
- If you do not plant, you will not reap.
- You reap in proportion to what you have planted. (Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-8.)

"Consider carefully what you hear," he continued. "With the measure you use, it will be measured to you-and even more. Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him" (Mark 4:24-25 *NIV*).

You always reap more than you plant. Someone has said, "Any fool can count the seeds in one apple, but only God can count the apples in one seed."

One small kernel of corn is planted. It produces two stalks, and each one has two ears of corn. Each ear contains over seven hundred kernels of corn. From one small seed 2,800 more kernels are produced.

Farmers value their seed, knowing that the seeds sown today will determine the harvest reaped tomorrow.

If seeds are carefully and prayerfully planted, God will cause them to produce.

A farmer evaluates everything he does to see if the activity contributes to the harvest. Harvest is that amazing season when farmers gather the fruits of their effort. It is always harvest time for the church. The world is a field, ready to be harvested (John 4:35).

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. What is the "law of the harvest"?

2. What do you think Robert L. Stevenson meant by, " Don't judge the day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds you plant"?

3. What did Kwame Nkrumah say as quoted in this lesson?

4. Write out Galatians 6:7. Learn this verse by memory.

5. What is needed in order to reap a harvest?

6. What are the various seasons of farming?

7. When someone comes to God is this usually a result of one person planting the seed of God's Word? Explain.

8. Who has the hardest job, the sower or the reaper? Explain.

9. What does the law of the harvest teach us?

10. How many kernels of corn can be produced from one kernel?_____

11. When is it harvest time for the church?_____

Evangelism

Lesson Four

The Lost Harvest

"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (Jeremiah 8:20).

FOCUS: If we do not reap the harvest it will be lost or someone else will reap it.

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

Jesus used the example of the harvest to represent the millions of people that need to be reached with the gospel. This example is relevant for all times. The image of the harvest speaks to everyone. Even those who live in the city understand the importance of the harvest. The harvest is necessary for our survival. Without it, there is suffering.

An elderly, pioneer preacher was sitting beside a young pastor in a church service, when John 4:35 was mentioned. With his huge hand, he slapped the young man on the leg and said in a loud voice, "Young man, do you understand what that scripture means? I'll tell you. The crop is so ripe that unless someone gets to it immediately, it will spoil."

It is not time to sleep during the harvest. We do not want the harvest to drop to the ground and spoil. Jesus said, "Do you think the work of harvesting will not begin until the summer ends four months from now? Look around you! Vast fields are ripening all around us and are ready now for the harvest" (John 4:35, *NLT*).

Curtis Young in the "The Lost Harvest" advises that the church cannot sit down

and wait for people to come to God. "Our job is to labor so that there will be a harvest. The season of harvest is that short period of time for gathering the ripened grain. The harvest can be lost during harvest season if the church is not prepared and ready to thrust in the sickle.

If the farmer is slothful and neglects the harvest, it will be lost. The same disappointment which comes to him will also come to the church when it is guilty of being slothful."

Kenneth F. Haney in his timely book, *One Vision*, explains that only the prepared will reap the harvest. When the harvest conditions are right, the church must move. If we hesitate to reap the harvest, someone else will get to it first. Rev. Haney states, "Whoever is present and prepared is going to reap the harvest."

Paul Baumeister in *Connect* magazine Winter 2000, wrote, "There are good and bad harvesters...A harvester is not by definition God's harvester. A harvester is merely someone who recognizes that the fields are white unto harvest. So, there are harvesters of all kinds, as well as apostolic harvesters. Why is everyone flocking to these fertile areas? They recognize the great amount of crop ready for harvesting."

Many cults are prepared to reap a harvest. We cannot sit idly watching! Will you be there to meet the challenge of the ripened harvest?

A terrible storm ruined a fine crop of grain. Crops on other farms had been gathered before the storm struck. The owner of the field sadly stood, in silence, looking at his ruined harvest.

A stranger walking along the road came up to the farmer and said, "It is a really sad sight, isn't it?"

The farmer replied, "You would really think it was a sad sight if it were your field. I could not get anyone to help me harvest the field." (*Behold the Harvest* by Dale Rumble)

A ripened harvest can be lost and go to eternal waste because the laborers are not in the field gathering the crop.

Our goal is to harvest a crop of souls. "And the fruit they harvest is people brought to eternal life" (John 4:36, *NLT*). The enemy will do all possible to stop us from reaching our target.

Matthew 9:38 reveals the only prayer request ever given by Jesus. He said, "So pray to the one in charge of the harvesting, and ask him to recruit more workers for his harvest fields" (*TLB*).

Why should we pray that the Lord would send more workers into the field?

- Two situations: the harvest is great, and the workers are few. Luke 10:2 tells us "the harvest is plentiful." Every farmer with a bountiful harvest rejoices. This is a blessing. The problem is that a shortage of laborers can also result in a lost harvest.
- Jesus did not ask that we pray for the harvest (the unsaved world). They are ripe, ready for harvesting. It is not sufficient to pray for the lost without going to the lost. Therefore, we pray that the saved will have a vision for the lost world. Prayer awakens us to the need of reaching the harvest. It has a way of shaping us so that He can use us.
- Faith is demonstrated through prayer. John saw a people of every tribe (Revelation 5:9). The mission was accomplished. Peter preached that God was going to pour out His Spirit upon all flesh (Acts 2:17).

- Through prayer God touches hearts. When we pray we open ourselves to the will of God, become sensitive to His heartbeat, and join His labor force.
- Time is running out. The harvest will be lost if we fail to obey the great commission.

"All of us must quickly carry out the tasks assigned us by the one who sent me, for there is little time left before the night falls and all work comes to an end" (John 9:4, *TLB*).

Let us pray that the Lord of the Harvest will send forth more farmers. Why not join the harvesting team now?

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. What is the harvest season?

2. Kenneth Haney claims that only those that are _____ and _____ will reap the harvest.
3. What two situations are mentioned in Matthew 9:38?

4. Why did Jesus ask us to pray for laborers and not the harvest itself?

5. What did John see in Revelation 5:9?

6. What is a harvester?

Evangelism

Lesson Five

What Is Evangelism?

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

FOCUS: Provide a clear picture of what is meant by "evangelism" and explain why we should obey the great commission.

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED



Close your eyes. Allow your mind to draw a picture of evangelism or an evangelist in action. What do you see? Do you see a crusade with thousands of people gathered listening to a fiery, anointed evangelist? Do you see someone passing out tracts? Do you picture a believer sharing his testimony with an unbeliever? What about a preacher preparing a radio broadcast? Do you envision a revival meeting in your local church? The picture you imagined explains much about your concept of evangelism.

Evangelism is:

1. **Sowing** (planting) the seed (Psalms 126:6).
2. **Reaping** the harvest. Jews historically called their rabbis and students "reapers" and their work of instruction "the harvest" (Matthew 9:37-38).
3. **Fishing** for men (Matthew 4:19).
4. **Persuading** men (2 Corinthians 5:11).

5. **Rescuing** men (Jude 22-23).
6. **Sharing** the good news (Luke 2:10).
7. **Winning** souls into the kingdom of God (Proverbs 11:30).
8. **Fulfilling** the great commission (Matthew 28:19-20).
9. **Going** (Mark 16:15).
10. **Witnessing** (Acts 1:8).
11. **Answering** questions concerning the hope within (1 Peter 3:15).
12. **Speaking** the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15).
13. **Guiding** others to salvation (Acts 8:29-30).
14. **Salting** the earth (Matthew 5:13).
15. **Lighting** the world (Matthew 5:14).
16. **Turning** people from darkness to light (Acts 26:18).
17. **Bearing** precious seed that develops into fruit that will remain (John 15:8, 16).
18. **Seeking** the lost (Luke 19:10).



Evangelism is like a garden; if it is not planted, it cannot be harvested.

Evangelism is God's work done through people. It is reaching out to others who do not know the Lord Jesus Christ.

W. E. McCumber in *Everybody Into the Field* explains that in pagan times the announcement of the emperor's birthday or his ascension to the throne was called an "evangel." The church later adopted this terminology in talking about the gospel. He defines evangelism as "everything the church does that aims at the conversion of people." It is more than just good news. It is God's news!

Evangelism has been likened to one beggar telling another beggar where to go to get bread.

The great commission is found in five locations.

- Matthew 28:19-20.
- Mark 16:15-18.
- Luke 24:47-49.
- John 20:21-22.
- Acts 1:8.

Why obey the great commission?

1. It finishes the job Christ started and allows us to fulfill our purpose (and His) on the earth.
2. It helps us discover our potential and use our talents for the expansion of the kingdom.
3. Evangelism provides new members for the church and members provide the needed finance.
4. Obedience brings the joy to the soul-winner. Leading someone to the truth is the greatest contribution you can ever make to his life.
5. It helps us to establish life-long relationships with others.
6. It builds up church attendance and assures the future of the church.
7. It causes rejoicing in heaven.
8. It reminds us that we too were once sinners.
9. It keeps us on fire for God.
10. It allows us to have a greater passion for the lost and vision to reach them.

Think about it. If you knew you had only five minutes left to live and many people were listening to your last words, what would you say?

With Jesus' last earthly words He reminded His disciples of what He

expected from them. He expected that wherever they went, they would tell others the good news about Him. It was not only a command, but also a promise.

"But when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will receive power and will tell people about me everywhere" (Acts 1:8, *NLT*).

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. Provide ten phrases and corresponding scriptural references that give us an idea of what is meant by evangelism.

2. Give five reasons why we should obey the great commission.

3. Define evangelism.

Evangelism

Lesson Six

Who to Evangelize?

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

FOCUS: Explain who is to be evangelized and provide statistics on the unreached.

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

God is patient with us (believers); not willing that any (of the unbelievers) should perish, but that all should come to repentance. God wants all men to be saved. He wants no one to perish.

Mark Conner in *Transforming Your Church* suggests four areas of outreach.

1. **Inside the church.** Many people visit our church meetings. How these people are treated will have a big impact on whether or not they become converted.
2. **Friends.** Each Christian has a network of friends and contacts that do not yet know the Lord. The longer we are Christians the more we isolate ourselves from friendships outside of the church.

You can reach certain people others cannot reach. Nine out of ten people come to Christ as a direct result of relationships.

Studies show that many people leaving the church do so because they cannot find a friend in the congregation.

3. **Community.** The great commission is to "go." We must go to our community. It is our harvest field right at our doorsteps.
4. **World.** We are to go into the entire world and preach the gospel to every creature. This includes people often forgotten or overlooked—the poor, crippled, lame, and blind (Luke 14:12-14). Add to this list drunkards, prostitutes, drug users, AIDS patients, and derelicts. They will come with their problems, but Jesus is the answer. His desire is that His house will be full (Luke 14:23).

Jack Cunningham in *Advanced Church Planting* says, "In the last fifteen years one billion people have entered eternity. Half of them (500 million) never heard the name of Jesus spoken one time in their lifetime. Every day 139,560 people die; 339,500 are born. The earth's population is increasing by 200,000 every day. When you go to church next Sunday, there will be over one million more people in the world than last Sunday."

Statistics show (October 1999) the world population has passed the six billion mark. Every twelve years one billion more people are added.

G. Randy Adams in *World Missions* (Ministerial Development Series) said if all the unsaved people in the world were to line up single file at your front door, the line would reach around the world thirty times. This line would grow by thirty-two kilometers each day. If you were to drive a car at eighty kilometers per hour for ten hours a day, it would take you four years

and forty days to get to the end of this line of lost souls. And by then it would have increased in length by 48,279 kilometers.

But, if there were only one Christian on the face of the earth, and he determined to reach one other person within a year, and then they determined to reach one other person each for the following year, and this process continued, in thirty-three years there would be more than four billion believers. In thirty-four years there would be 8,589,934,592 Christians.

Wycliffe Bible Translators report that over 440 million people still do not have the Bible in their language. The U. S. Center for World Missions estimates that there are 8,000 people groups that do not have access to a church or the opportunity to hear the gospel.

Why Are So Many Still Unreached?

Robertson McQuilkin in *The Great Commission: A Biblical Basis for World Evangelism* relates a story that took place while he was teaching a large group of students. He had just explained how half of the world's population has not heard the good news and cannot hear because there is no witnessing church among them.

"How come?" a voice rang from the back of the auditorium.

"How come, what?" McQuilkin asked.

"With so many lost people, how come so few are going?"

"That is a good question," McQuilkin responded.

"In fact, I know someone who asks that question every day."

"Who's that?" asked the student from the back of the auditorium.

The teacher lifted his eyes gesturing upward. A silence settled over the classroom.

McQuilkin provides five answers to the question, "How come?"

1. **Heart Trouble.** We do not care about the lost. We are preoccupied with our own interests and needs.
2. **Eye Trouble.** We do not have a vision. We do not see the people from God's perspective.
3. **Head Trouble.** We think there must be another way.
4. **Knee Trouble.** We treat praying as a nonessential in life. Studies show that many spend as little as four minutes a day in prayer.
5. **Ear Trouble.** Someone is not listening to the call. God is calling, but people are not listening.

"And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?" (Romans 10:14, *NLT*)

Who Needs to Be Reached?

There are so many unreached people in the world. Who is to be evangelized? The easiest response to the question is "everybody." We will look at more specific groups of those that should be evangelized in a future lesson. Let us look at who should be evangelized in a general sense.

1. **Sinners**— transgressor, natural man, unrighteous man, heathen (Psalms 2:8), unbeliever.

A sinner is:

- ☑ Someone that does the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19).
- ☑ Dead in trespasses and sin (Ephesians 2:1).
- ☑ Walks according to the course of this world (Ephesians 2:2).
- ☑ A person living in spiritual darkness (Ephesians 5:8).
- ☑ A person that is condemned (John 3:18).
- ☑ A servant of sin (Romans 6:15-18).
- ☑ Born in sin (Psalms 51:4-5).
- ☑ Someone who has not obeyed the gospel (James 1:22; 4:17).

More Facts on Sin

- ☑ All have sinned (Romans 3:23).
- ☑ There is none righteous (Romans 3:10).
- ☑ The payment of sin is death (Romans 6:23).
- ☑ One man brought sin (Romans 5:19).
- ☑ Sin is transgression (1 John 3:4).
- ☑ All unrighteousness is sin (1 John 5:17).

Jack W. Hayford in *Spreading the Good News to Everyone* says that world evangelism will take place when we see all people as God sees them—as sinners (Romans 3:10; 3:23; 6:23).

- ☑ **Unbelievers.** There are three types of unbelievers in this world: those that willfully reject truth; those that put off accepting truth, the neglectors; and those that have never heard. All three groups will be lost and condemned because they have not believed. (See John 3:14-18; Romans 10:13-15.)
- ☑ **The lost** (Luke 19:10). Read the “Lost Chapter”—Luke 15. The lost sheep knew that he was lost but didn’t know his way back home. The lost coin was lost but didn’t even know that it was lost. The prodigal son knew he was lost and knew his way back home. Bill

Hybels in *Becoming a Contagious Christian* suggests that Jesus told these three stories in rapid succession to make an impression on His listeners. This is the only time that Jesus told three parables in a row. He wanted to make sure that everyone understood what and who really matters to God. In each story great value was attached to what was missing. The lost sheep mattered to the shepherd. The lost coin was of great value to the woman. The wayward son mattered to the father. All heaven rejoices when the lost are found. The lost matter to God!

2. God-fearers:

- ☑ Do not have a full knowledge of the truth. Speak the truth in love to them (Ephesians 4:15).
- ☑ We need to identify where they are in their spiritual walk and then show them the way of God more perfectly.
- ☑ Provide further truth for serious seekers: Cornelius (Acts 10); Apollos (Acts 18); Lydia (Acts 16); disciples at Ephesus (Acts 19); Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8). In each case, the preacher started where they were spiritually and progressed from there.

3. Backsliders (Galatians 6:1).

- ☑ Prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32).

The lost are waiting. “But how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?” (Romans 10:14, *NLT*).

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. What are four areas of outreach mentioned in this lesson?

2. What is the population of the world?

3. How many people still do not have the Bible in their language?

4. How many people are added to the world's population every twelve years?

5. According to McQuilken, what are some of the reasons people do not respond to the need to reach the unreached?

6. What is a sinner?

7. What is sin?

8. Which chapter of the Book of Luke is referred to as the "Lost Chapter"?

9. What are the three types of unbelievers mentioned in this lesson?

10. Give two examples from Acts of people who were seeking for and received further truth.

Evangelism

Lesson Seven

Who Evangelizes?

"As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21).

FOCUS: Explain scriptural pictures of evangelists and the spiritual qualifications.

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

Scriptural pictures of a personal evangelist:

- ☑ **Witness** (Acts 1:8; 22:15). We give a testimony or evidence of what the Lord has done in our lives or an incident that has happened.



- ☑ **Newspaper** (2 Corinthians 3:2-3). We are like newspapers that can be read by non-Christians. We are to spread the good news.



- ☑ **Publisher**. The evangelist is a publisher of the good news (Psalm 68:11; Mark 13:10; Acts 13:49). He is a part of the five-fold ministry of the church (Ephesians 4:11-12). His tools are the Word of God, prayer, fasting, and spiritual gifts. Evangelism gifts include working of miracles, gift of faith, and gifts of healing.



- ☑ **Fisherman** (Matthew 4:19). Fishermen know their fish. He learns the right techniques of catching as many fish as possible. He knows where to go to catch the most fish. He studies the habits of the fish. He fishes often (not just a couple of times a year). He will try new methods.

"And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men" (Luke 5:10). This was not only a command. It was a promise that applies to our generation.



Rev. J. R. Richardson, Africa Region Director, said, "We are to be fishers of men but have become keepers of the aquarium. We feed the fish we have, change the water, and take care of them but are doing little to reach the entire world. The Lord desires to change that in

us. We do not have the right to tell the same people the truth over and over again when most of the country has never heard it."

- ☑ **Farmer** (Matthew 13:1-43). We must cultivate, sow and reap. Matthew 13 reveals that every person without Christ is soil to be cultivated.



- ☑ **Fireman** (Jude 23).



- ☑ **Ambassador** (2 Corinthians 5:11-6:10). We are called to be the ambassador for the King of kings. We have been commissioned as His personal representatives.



- ☑ **Friend** (Matthew 11:19). We need to hate sin, but love sinners. Jesus loved people and spent time with them (Luke 22:37). Jesus ate in the home of sinners, witnessed to the Samaritan woman, and spent time with Mary Magdalene. Douglas Shaw in *Sharing Jesus* suggests His target audience for His strong love as the despised (Matthew 9:9-13), the depraved (Luke 19:1-10), and the deprived (Luke 4:18).



It is such a privilege to be a soul winner. Every member and minister should become involved in evangelism. Charles Spurgeon, as quoted in *Effective Evangelism* said, "Even if I were utterly selfish, I would choose, if I might, under God, to be a soul-winner; for never did I know perfect, overflowing, unutterable happiness of the purest and most ennobling order till I first heard of one who had sought and found the Saviour through my means. No young mother ever so rejoiced over her first-born child, no warrior was so exultant over a hard-won victory."

Qualifications of Spiritual Farmers

"The harvest is so great, and the workers are so few," he told his disciples. "So pray to the one in charge of the harvesting, and ask him to recruit more workers for his harvest fields" (Matthew 9:37-38, *TLB*).

God is a great employer and is looking for the best in potential workers. His recruitments should possess the following qualities:

1. **Passion for the Lost.** God's heart for the lost is a theme that runs throughout the Scriptures. Evangelists need to have an importation of God's heartbeat for the lost. The motivation for evangelism must be, at the heart, a passion for souls and a desire to see souls saved.

Jim and Carol Plueddemann in *Witnesses to All the World* state, "Of thirty-five missionaries who went to Ghana between 1835 and 1870, only two lived more than two years. Some nineteenth-century missionaries packed their belongings in coffin-shaped boxes that could also be used for their burials, since death was so common."

A lighthouse keeper watched as a terrible storm erupted at sea. Suddenly the man saw a small ship in distress. He turned to his apprentice and told him, "Let's go!"

The frightened apprentice answered, "But, if we go out there, we may never come back."

The lighthouse keeper responded, "We have to go out. We don't have to come back."

2. **Disciplined.** He has a call and is a man of prayer and fasting.

3. **Prepared.** Be instant in season and out of season (2 Timothy 4:2).
4. **Work.** "Do the work of an evangelist" (2 Timothy 4:5). Besides evangelizing the lost, the work includes equipping people to share their faith. Evangelists stir up a passion for the lost and help the church keep focused on the primary mission of the church. Through your witness, you will take souls to heaven with you. Through failure to witness, souls will be left to die in their sins.
5. **Faith.** An evangelist should be convinced that when the gospel is preached, people will come to God (James 1:6-7).

J. Oswald Sanders tells a story about an early student at Spurgeon's College who came to him one day and lamented, "I have been preaching for several months, and I do not think I have had a single conversion."

Spurgeon asked, "Do you think that the Lord is going to bless you with souls being saved each time you open your mouth."

"No, sir!" was the student's reply.

"That is why you do not have souls getting saved under your ministry. If you have had faith and believed, the Lord would have given you the blessing."

It is important that we seek the lost, bring them to church and provide an evangelistic service for them. Altar calls should be a common occurrence in our services, giving sinners the opportunity to make peace with God.

Effective evangelists believe in the power of the gospel (Romans 1:16). They know that God's Word is cross-cultural and will work anywhere it is preached. They also

believe in the power of the name of Jesus (Philippians 2:10; Acts 3:16; 4:12).

6. **Burden.** It is difficult to teach someone to have a burden. It comes through prayer and seeking God's will and loving the way He loves. The early church was consumed with a burden to affect their generation with the gospel. All Asia heard the Word within two years (Acts 19:10).
7. **Love People.** Evangelism is people business. People matter to God. They should matter to us too (Luke 4:18).
8. **Caring.** God cares about people. Each lost person that is found receives a heavenly party (Luke 15). It has often been said, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."
9. **Vision.** Jesus announced His purpose in coming to mankind, "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). We would do well to have the same vision. Evangelists realize that soul winning is their main business. (It should be the main pursuit of every Christian.)

Paul said, "I might by all means save some" (1 Corinthians 9:22).

10. **Patience.** This is one of the most outstanding characteristics of an evangelist (Luke 21:19; Galatians 6:9). He never gives up.
11. **Study.** An evangelist is self-disciplined. He becomes more effective through Bible study (2 Timothy 2:15). He also studies church growth principles and evangelism methods.

12. **Self-encouraged** (1 Samuel 30:6). Discouraging times will come when the evangelist will need to encourage himself in the Lord.
13. **Innovative.** Willing to try new methods and be creative. The evangelist is constantly searching for new and effective methods of winning souls.
14. **Time.** The evangelist gives priority time to soul winning.
15. **Committed.** The following was found among a young African pastor's papers after he was martyred.

"I am part of the fellowship of the unashamed. I have Holy Spirit power. The die has been cast. I have stepped over the line. The decision has been made. I am a disciple of His and I won't look back, let up, slow down, back away, or be still.

"My past is redeemed. My present makes sense. My future is secure. I am done and finished with low living, sight walking, small planning, smooth knees, colorless dreams, tamed visions, mundane talking, cheap living, and dwarfed goals.

"I no longer need preeminence, prosperity, position, promotions, plaudits, or popularity. I don't have to be right, or first, tops, recognized, praised, or rewarded. I live by faith, lean on His presence, walk by patience, lift by prayer, and labor by Holy Spirit power.

"My face is set. My gait is fast. My goal is heaven. My road may be narrow, my way rough, my companions few, but my guide is reliable and my mission is clear.

"I will not be bought, compromised, detoured, lured away, turned back, deluded or delayed.

"I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice or hesitate in the presence of the adversary. I will not negotiate at the table of the enemy, ponder at the pool of popularity, or meander in the maze of mediocrity.

"I won't give up, shut up or let up until I have stayed up, stored up, prayed up, paid up, and preached up for the cause of Christ.

"I am a disciple of Jesus. I must give until I drop, preach until all know, and work until He comes. And when He does come for His own, He'll have no problem recognizing me. My colors will be clear!"

16. **Boldness.** It is easy to stand for truth when everyone is agreeing with you. It is harder to stand for truth when others do not agree. R. M. Buie once said, "Evangelism is embracing those who are in error while maintaining your anchor in truth. It is extending God's love while maintaining your foundation in the Word of God."

Norman Cates shared a story of a man who prayed each morning, "Lord, if you want me to witness to someone today, please give me a sign and show me who it is."

One day he was sitting on a bus when a huge man sat beside him. The shy, fearful Christian anxiously waited for his stop so he could get off the bus. Suddenly, the man beside him burst into tears and cried out, "I need to be saved. I'm a lost sinner and I need Jesus. Won't somebody help me to be saved?"

The believer bowed his head and prayed, "Lord, is this a sign?"

This humorous story hits on a true point. We often are fearful of witnessing for Christ. We need to pray for boldness (Acts 4:29-31; 2 Timothy 1:7; Hebrews 13:5-6).

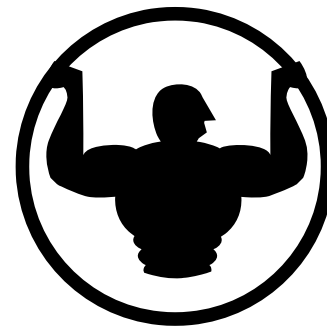
17. **Wisdom.** It takes wisdom to witness effectively and lead someone into the truth. The wise man said, "He that winneth souls is wise" (Proverbs 11:30).

"Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone" (Colossians 4:5-6, *NIV*).

19. **Adaptable.** Paul said, "I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings" (1 Corinthians 9:22-23, *NIV*).

Farmers plant a variety of seeds based on the soil, climate, and season.

Youth—Potential Work Force



The youth of our churches are untapped labor forces and resources. Our young people have tremendous strength, abilities, and powerful testimonies. Their energies should be mobilized for the task of world evangelism.

"I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one" (1 John 2:14).

"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in

faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (1 Timothy 4:12-16).

When he was well over seventy, John Mott said, "We must be constantly weaving into our organization the new generation. My work the world over and across many years has shown me that young people can be trusted with great loads and great responsibilities. Youth have never disappointed me when I have put heavy burdens on them."

Ron Luce, founder and president of Teen Mania says, "Our greatest natural resources—the vision and energy of a whole generation of youth—are being squandered." (Taken from *A Force in the Earth* by David Shibley).

Why not allow the Lord to use you today?

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. What are five scriptural pictures of a personal evangelist? Provide a scripture for each.

2. What was Jesus' target audience (according to Douglas Shaw)?

3. What is the twofold work of an evangelist in the church?

4. What are ten qualifications of spiritual farmers?

5. Why should we mobilize youth for the work of world evangelism?

Evangelism

Lesson Eight

The Evangelistic Church

"I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name...I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee" (Revelation 3:8-9).

FOCUS: Explain how to build a growing, evangelistic church.

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED



Growing churches are always evangelistic. They may have different characteristics, but they all have one thing in common. They maintain a primary vision of reaching the lost. A large percentage of their people are involved in evangelism-oriented ministries.

I noticed on the back of a van, "We go, sow, and grow."

Growing churches are consistent in their determination to win the lost. Consistency

is the key. Someone has said that right decisions made repeatedly over time compound success.

L. R. Scarborough said, "It is found that so long as the heart of an institution burns hot with the fires of soul-winning, it is not likely to drift in its theology." Lack of evangelism is a sure sign of a dying church.

Church growth experts refer to a term called "ingrowth" or "inreach." This means the church looks only inward to itself. The church that practices ingrowth will usually die within two generations. Focus needs to be shifted outward. The church needs to be involved in "conversion growth," "outgrowth" or "outreach." Here attention is focused on the unchurched (outward to the community), instead of the church (inward to the believers). There needs to be a priority shift from inreach to outreach.

Types of Growth

1. **Biological Growth.** Children are born and grow up in the church. (Ingrowth)
2. **Transfer Growth.** People leave one church and move to another. (Ingrowth)
3. **Conversion Growth.** People are converted. (Outgrowth)

It is interesting to note that churches also decline for three opposite reasons: death, transfer, and backsliding.

George Barna in *Evangelism that Works* found several common characteristics of evangelistic churches.

1. The weekend services were central to winning souls.
2. The intentional ministry focus of the church is constantly directed to

outreach. The preaching is directed to evangelism; classes are offered giving training opportunities in personal evangelism, and the pastor models evangelistic passion and lifestyle. Evangelism is emphasized in each aspect of the church's ministry. Personal testimonies from new converts are used to encourage the church to evangelize. Local leaders are held accountable for their involvement in various evangelistic activities. People are more apt to do what they hear repeated over and over from the pulpit.

3. The church uses a wide variety of events or programs to reach out to people.
4. Evangelistic churches study what other churches are doing and adopt and adapt their methods liberally. Leadership in evangelism has more to do with focus and hard work than with new ideas and methods. Great ideas and methods are translated into the local context.
5. Evangelistic churches rely on people to evangelize and invest a large portion of their budgets in evangelism.
6. Evangelistic churches do not feel forced to copy other churches. They have freedom to pursue courses of action that may differ from others.

Irvin J. Cunningham, in a *Barnabas Report*, "Building an Evangelistic Church," provides several suggestions. These have been adapted for your study. He claims that the "most pressing problem in the church is the lack of evangelism." In reading the Book of Acts "one of the most impressive things we find is that New Testament

Christians were scattered everywhere preaching the Word." (See Acts 8:4; 19:10.)

Cunningham suggests:

1. Strive to become known as a center for evangelism. Everything you do should have evangelism as its focus.
2. The pastor must set the example. Whatever the pastor does will set the pace for the rest of the church.
3. Every service should be evangelistic. Each time visitors are present make an appeal to reach them. Create an evangelistic atmosphere.

Rick Warren in *The Purpose Driven Church* explains that a simple, childlike ministry attracts people. Jesus was able to attract large crowds (Matthew 4:25; Mark 12:37) because of three things:

- He loved them.
- He met their needs (Matthew 15:30).
- He taught them in interesting and practical ways (Matthew 13:34; Mark 10:1).

These ingredients will attract crowds today. To the believers Jesus says, "Go and tell!" To the unbelievers He invites, "Come and see!" (John 1:39; 7:37).

4. Make evangelism important in the church. Make heroes out of your soul winners. Let your church know that winning souls is what you expect from them. People do what is inspected, and not what is expected. Hold your staff and people responsible for reaching out to others.
5. Hold periodic classes that teach evangelism.
6. Have periodic revivals where people being witnessed to can be harvested. It is a great motivation

to reach the lost when you see someone you witness to repent, be baptized, and filled with the Holy Ghost.

7. Stress evangelism in each service. Receive testimonies from those who are winning the lost. Let new converts testify of what the Lord has done for them through the evangelistic efforts of the local church.
8. Stay focused on evangelism. Keep the vision before your people—through preaching, teaching, testimonies or by using banners or bookmarks.
9. Use the method that is working and only as long as it works.
10. Teach new converts to bring their lost friends. People who have been in the church for less than six months win more than seventy-five percent of all converts. This is because the convert still has many contacts (family, friends) in the world. Secondly, the new convert is excited about what the Lord has done and wants to tell everyone.
11. Assign members to visit those who are absent from service.
12. Have new convert classes and programs to encourage retention of converts.

Evangelism and Church Growth (General Editor: Elmer Towns) explains several widely accepted preconditions for growth in the local church. They include:

- The pastor must want the church to grow and be willing to pay the price.
- The people must want the church to grow and be willing to pay the price.
- The church must agree that the goal of evangelism is to make disciples.

Ralph Neighbor estimates the average church will spend 300 hours a year

equipping members for service within the church and less than twelve hours a year equipping members to witness outside of the church. This exposes our shameful failures in setting priorities.

C. Peter Wagner in *Strategies for Church Growth* suggests four things to check if your ministry is not growing:

- Be sure you are in the vine (John 15:16).
- Be sure you are preaching to the right people.
- Be sure you are using the right methods.
- Be sure you are working hard enough.

“Lost people are more amazed at our silence than offended at our message.”
Alvin Reid

G. Randy Adams suggested that there are two things that can hinder the growth of the church.

- A church that remains stationary.
- A church that remains silent.

Let’s go and proclaim the good news.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. What one thing does all growing churches have in common?

2. What is lack of evangelism a sure sign of?

3. What is the difference between “ingrowth” and “outgrowth”?

Evangelism

Lesson Nine

Vision

"Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18).

FOCUS: Explain the various areas where it is beneficial for us to have a vision.

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

Every successful, productive man of God possesses a vision. A quick look at Isaiah 6 will reveal three visions that Isaiah experienced.

- Upward Vision (Isaiah 6:1-3).
- Inward Vision (Isaiah 6:5).
- Outward Vision (Isaiah 6:8).

Isaiah focused on God, saw himself, and then he got a vision of the lost world.

The Association of Church Missions Committees suggests that we develop a bifocal vision.

- Nearsighted.** Look close by to the needs and the lost around us.
- Farsighted.** Look beyond ourselves to the world in need and the opportunity to minister globally.

Each of us needs to receive a vision in five areas so that we can be effective soul winners.

VISION OF HEAVEN

"Jesus has gone away to heaven, and some day, just as he went, he will return!" (Acts 1:11, *TLB*).

Jesus is coming back soon! (See Romans 13:11). The Bible is filled with the promise of His return. David Jeremiah in *Jesus' Final Warning* found that there are 1,845 references to this event in the Old Testament and 318 in the New Testament. Forty books of the Bible speak of the promise of His return. For every prophecy concerning the first coming of Christ, there are eight concerning His Second Coming.

Jesus testified, "Surely, I come quickly" (Revelation 22:20).

The word "heaven" is mentioned 582 times in the Bible. It is real, a prepared place for a prepared people.

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2-3).

- A place for born-again believers (John 3:3).
- Glorious city (Revelation 21:11-18).
- River of life is there to insure everlasting life (Revelation 22:1).
- The tree of life is there to insure abundant life (Revelation 22:2).
- The throne of God will be there (Revelation 4:2).
- It has twelve layers of foundation; each inlaid with a different gem. It has twelve gates with an angel standing guard at each gate (Revelation 21:19-20; 21: 12).
- The main street is of transparent gold (Revelation 21:21).
- It is a place for all eternity (John 3:15).
- Location of our treasures as Christians (Matthew 6:20).
- Our true home (Hebrews 12:22).
- Dwelling place of God.

According to the Book of Revelation in heaven there will be no more...

- ☑ Tears (21:4)
- ☑ Sickness (22:2)
- ☑ Pain (21:4)
- ☑ Death (21:4)
- ☑ Thirst (7:16)
- ☑ Hunger (7:16)
- ☑ Sin (21:27)
- ☑ Sun or moon (21:23)
- ☑ Judgment (22:3)
- ☑ Night (21:25)
- ☑ Temple (21:22)

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Revelation 21:4).

VISION OF HELL

"And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 23).

The problem with many Christians today is that they do not believe in "hell." C. S. Lewis wrote, "There is no doctrine which I would more willingly remove from Christianity than this (hell). I would pay any price to be able to say, 'All will be saved.'"

Luke 16:19-31 vividly describes an heir of hell enjoying life in his home and an heir of heaven sitting at the gate, perishing with hunger. The time came when both died. The beggar was carried to Abraham's side, and the rich man went to hell. There he was in torment and looked for a way to be delivered from the agony of the fire. He pleaded, "Send the beggar Lazarus to my father's house. I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so they will not come to this place of torment."

Abraham answered, "They have the prophets; let them listen to them."

What happens if they are not willing to share the gospel?

From this story we learn:

- ☑ The souls of men live forever.
- ☑ There is a heaven to gain and a hell to shun. Both are real.
- ☑ The rich man cared, but he cared too late.
- ☑ If souls are reached, it will be because others went to them.
- ☑ If souls are reached, it will be because they have listened to a witness, preacher, or the Word of God.

Hell is described using the following words:

- ☑ The lowest pit
- ☑ Worm dieth not
- ☑ Fire is not quenched
- ☑ Outer darkness
- ☑ Furnace of fire
- ☑ Wailing
- ☑ Weeping
- ☑ Gnashing of teeth
- ☑ Lake of fire burning with brimstone
- ☑ Tormented day and night forever
- ☑ Underworld
- ☑ Region of the departed
- ☑ Place of departed spirits
- ☑ Unquenchable fire
- ☑ Pits of darkness
- ☑ Smoke of their torment
- ☑ Place of punishment
- ☑ Black darkness

Studies show that "hell" is a place of punishment translated "Gehenna," the Greek form of the Hebrew word that means, "the vale of Hinnom." This was a valley located south of Jerusalem. Here the Canaanites worshiped Baal and the fire-god Molech by sacrificing their children in a fire that burned continuously.

Jeremiah prophesied that this place would be known as the "Valley of Slaughter" (Jeremiah 7:31-34; 19:2, 6).

During the time of Jesus' earthly ministry, the Valley of Hinnom was used as a garbage dump. All of the filth and waste of the city was thrown there. This included the dead bodies of animals and executed criminals. To consume this, fires burned relentlessly. Maggots ate away at the flesh of the animals and criminals. At night wild dogs howled as they gnashed their teeth, fighting over the treasures of the dump. Jesus used this scene to depict the awfulness of hell. Hell is God's "cosmic garbage dump." All that is unfit to go to heaven will be thrown there. Human language cannot describe the dreadfulness of hell or the majesty of heaven. (Reference used: *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary*.)

For a closer scriptural look at hell read: Matthew 8:12; 13:42; 13:50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Mark 9:46-47; Luke 13:28).

God does not want anyone to spend eternity in hell.

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8).

A Voice from Hell

You lived next door to me for years

We shared dreams, joys, and tears.
A friend to me, you were indeed,
A friend to help me when in need.

My faith in you was strong and sure;
We had such trust as should endure.
No spats between us ever arose,
Among our friends, and so our foes.

What sadness then, my friend to find
That after all, you weren't so kind.
The day on earth my life did end,
I found you weren't really a friend.
For all those years we spent on earth
We spoke of things that had some worth
You never spoke of my lost soul
And of Christ who'd make me whole.

I plead today from hell's cruel fire
And tell you now my last desire.
You cannot do a thing today for me,
No words today my bands will free.
But don't err, my friend again,
Do all you can for the souls of men.
Plead now with them quite earnestly,
Lest they be cast in hell with me!
(Author Unknown)

The words of Corrie Ten Boom are more preferable.

When I enter that beautiful city
And the saints all around me appear,
I hope that someone will tell me,
"It was you who invited me here."

William Booth, the founder of Salvation Army, once remarked, "Most Christian ministries would like to send their recruits to Bible college for four or five years. I would like to send our recruits to hell for five minutes. That would do more than anything else to prepare them for a lifetime of compassionate ministry." (*A Force in the Earth* by David Shibley)

It is not possible to take a five-minute excursion to hell, but it is possible to visit the local mortuary and/or cemetery.

VISION OF A LOST AND DYING WORLD

While speaking in London, D. L. Moody was approached by a British friend. He wanted to know the secret of Moody's success in bringing others to Christ. Moody invited the man to look out the window and asked him, "What do you see?"

The man reported that he saw crowded streets below. Moody requested that he look again. This time the man mentioned that he saw people—men, women, and children.

Moody insisted that he look a third time. The man became frustrated that he was not seeing what the great evangelist wanted him to see.

Moody came to the window with tears in his eyes and said, "I see people going to hell, lost without Jesus Christ."

What do you see at the bus stop, in busy traffic, in the marketplace, or as you pass others on crowded streets? Do you see the lost?

Jesus ministered to a blind man who saw men as walking trees. Another touch from the Master restored his sight, and he was able to see every man clearly. Pray that the Lord will open your eyes so that you see souls as the Lord of the harvest sees them.

"And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly" (Mark 8:23-25).

VISION OF THE LORD OF THE HARVEST SAYING, "WELL DONE!"

"His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matthew 25:21).

Studies conducted concerning why Christianity expanded under the oppressive Roman rule have found that:

1. Early Christians had great zeal.
2. They believed in future rewards.
3. There was a manifestation of miracles.
4. Christians lived a life of holiness (possessing pure morals).
5. Their church organization was compact. (Adapted from *Jesus' Final Warning*-David Jeremiah.)

Notice that one of the reasons Christianity thrived was because they had a strong belief in future rewards. They were willing to give their lives (if needed) for the gospel. God has a system of rewards (Psalm 58:11; 62:12; Mark 9:41; 10:29-30; Hebrews 6:10-12).

"Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven" (Matthew 5:12).

God will reward His people after the catching away of the church.

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10).

At the judgment seat of Christ, each life will be reviewed and rewards issued.

Crown of Victory	1 Corinthians 9:25-27
Crown of Rejoicing	1 Thessalonians 2:19
Crown of Righteousness	2 Timothy 4:8
Crown of Life	James 1:12; Revelation 2:10
Crown of Glory	1 Peter 5:4

The crown of rejoicing is considered to be the soul winner's crown. The greatest reward will be to hear Jesus say, "Well done!" What will we do with our rewards and crowns? We will cast our crowns before His throne (Revelation 4:10).

No one will want to stand in His presence empty-handed (Deuteronomy 16:16).

VISION OF THE VALUE OF A LOST, ETERNAL SOUL

There are three things that will last for eternity.

- God
- Word of God
- Souls of men

We need to invest our lives with a view of eternity.

God places great value on a lost soul (John 3:16). It was for this reason that Jesus came into the world.

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

In one short sentence Jesus described His purpose—"to seek and to save." He also explained His target group—the lost.

We remain on the earth to finish the task. Before He left, He said, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21).

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16).

Have you ever experienced the terror of being lost? How did you feel? Alone? Afraid? Disoriented?

The Bible used the term "lost" to describe those who are away from God and will perish if they are not found and saved. Some do not realize they are lost. They do not look to be rescued, recognize or accept the way of escape when it is offered.

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Corinthians 4:3-4).

What possession do you have that you consider of great value? What would you do if you lost it? Your mind would not be at rest. You would abandon everything you are doing and search for your valuable possession (until you find it).

Each lost soul has tremendous value. Jesus came to seek each one and gave His life at Calvary for their salvation. In Luke 15 we see various examples of things of great value that were missing. When found, each event produced rejoicing. The prodigal's father even threw a party when his son came home.

If you took a new (currency) note and offered it to a group of people, would anyone accept it? Yes, because everyone knows the value of money. If you took the note and wadded it up, would anyone still want it? Yes, because the value did not change. If the note were spit upon, would people still want it? Yes, the value still has not changed. Throw the note down and stomp it into the ground. Would anyone take it now? Yes, there still would be takers. Why? The note still has the same value.

A lost soul has tremendous value to Jesus Christ. It will never lose its worth. No matter how deep in sin a soul may get, no

matter how filthy he may become, a soul never loses its value. How much value do you place on a lost soul?

J. Oswald Sanders in *Effective Evangelism* gives the following ways that the value of the soul can be calculated?

- By its nature and origin (Genesis 1:27).
- By the duration of its existence (Matthew 25:46).
- By the cost of its redemption (1 Peter 1:18-19).
- By the struggle required for its possession (Matthew 12:29).

“But go rather to the lost...And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 10:6-7).

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. What three visions did Isaiah have in Isaiah 6?

2. What is meant by the bifocal vision of evangelism?

3. Jesus is coming back! Comment on how the Bible is filled with the promise of His return.

4. What did Jesus testify in Revelation 22:20?

5. Why do think it is important for us to have a vision of heaven?

6. What are four things that will not be found in heaven?

7. What did C. S. Lewis say about the doctrine of hell?

8. What are three things we learn from the story in Luke 16:19-31?

9. Describe hell.

10. Describe the Valley of Hinnom.

11. Why did William Booth wish that he could send his recruits to hell for five minutes?

12. What was the secret of Moody's success as an evangelist?

13. Which crown is considered the soul-winner's crown?

14. What are three things that last for eternity?

15. How do we know that God places great value on a lost soul?

16. What are three ways that the value of a lost soul can be calculated?

17. What five visions are needed to help us be effective soul winners?

Evangelism

Lesson Ten

Burden

But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Matthew 9:36).

FOCUS: Look briefly at the burden possessed by Jesus Christ and several notable men.

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

Charles Spurgeon expressed that if sinners were to be damned, they should have to leap over our bodies. If they were to perish, they should perish with our arms around their knees. He felt that no one should go to hell unwarned and unprayed for.

"If one-tenth of what you believe is true, you ought to be ten times as excited as you are." (Walter Moberly)

We must recognize our divine obligation. Jesus said to His earthly parents, "I must be about my Father's business" (Luke 2:49).

His burden, vision, and passion kept Him working. "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (John 9:4-5).

It was because of a burden for a lost soul that Jesus stated that He "must needs go through Samaria" (John 4:4).

It was because of a burden that Jesus said to the little man, "Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house" (Luke 19:5).

Because of a burden, Jesus claimed, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:16).

Jesus' burden caused Him to move from city to city, village to village, preaching the gospel. "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Matthew 9:35-36).

Jesus ultimately climbed Golgatha and hung on Calvary because of His burden and love for lost mankind. One Nigerian chorus says, "Jesus, surrendered His life for me. What have I done for Him?"

"But life is worth nothing unless I use it for doing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about God's mighty kindness and love" (Acts 20:24, TLB).

C. T. Studd, a missionary who served in China and Africa, said, "Some want to live within the sound of a church or chapel bell. I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell."

David Holdaway in *Never Enough* claims that it was an article by a non-believer that motivated Studd to give all to the Lord. Holdaway's quotation of the article appears below:

"If I firmly believed, as millions say they do, that knowledge and practice of religion in this life influences destiny in another, then religion would mean to me everything. I would cast away earthly enjoyments as dross, earthly cares as follies, and earthly thoughts and feelings as vanity. Religion would be my first waking thought and my last image before sleep sank me into unconsciousness. I should labor for its cause alone. I would take thought for the morrow of eternity alone. I would esteem one soul gained for heaven a life worth suffering.

"Earthly consequences would never stay my hand or seal my lips. Earth, its joys and griefs, would occupy no moment of my thoughts. I would strive to look upon eternity alone, and on the immortal souls around me, soon to be everlastingly happy or everlastingly miserable. I would go forth to the world and preach to it in season and out of season."

The story is told of a prison chaplain who tried to share the gospel with a condemned man. After listening to the man's appeal, the prisoner responded, "Do you really believe the gospel, Chaplain? If I believed your gospel were true, I would crawl across England on broken glass to tell men about it."

The reality of our beliefs determines the urgency of our witness.

It is unusual to see a man cry (weep). Crying is usually manifested as a result of:

- Sadness (Joel 2:12; Psalm 30:5).
- Joy.
- Burden (Psalm 126:5-6).

William Booth-Clibborn talked of "the curse of dry-eyed Christianity."

Paul possessed a great burden for people. "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" (Acts 20:31).

One man was finding his work difficult, experiencing little progress. William Booth sent him this message, "Try tears!" It made the difference.

William Carey is considered to be the father of modern missions. He had an immense burden for the lost. As a young man, he worked in a shoe cobbler's shop. He saved discarded bits and pieces of shoe leather and made a makeshift globe. He sketched in ink the outlines of the continents and various countries on his crude leather globe.

It is said that Carey's tears of intercession for the world literally blurred the outlines of the nations on his handmade globe. He became a missionary to India and changed the course of mission's history throughout the world.

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

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. What is crying usually a result of?

2. What does the reality of our beliefs determine?

3. What did Charles Spurgeon say about sinners that were to be damned?

4. Give two examples that would show Jesus possessed a burden for souls.

5. What did C. T. Studd say in this lesson?

6. What did William Booth tell the man who was struggling to see growth in his area of responsibility? Why do you think he said that?

7. According to Acts 20:24 *TLB*, what is the work assigned to us?

8. What are five things that the man (quoted by David Holdaway) said he would do if he believed that millions were lost?

Evangelism

Lesson Eleven

Why Evangelize?

"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" (Romans 1:16).

FOCUS: To explain why we should be involved in evangelism.

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

We evangelize...

1. Because Jesus came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10).
2. Because we truly believe that there is no other way to be saved (Acts 4:12).
3. Because how else shall they hear? (Romans 10:14-15). Vinson Synan once said concerning world evangelization, "If not us, who? If not now, when?"
4. Because Jesus commanded it (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19-20; John 20:22; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47).
5. Because Jesus does not want anyone to perish (2 Peter 3:9; John 3:15-16).
6. Because it makes heaven happy (Luke 15:10). Evangelism creates joy in heaven. Heaven gets more excited about the lost being found than any other thing.
7. Because the gospel is good news. It is only good news when it is shared (Luke 4:18).
8. Because we are the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:27). Jesus Christ is in us (Colossians 1:27).

9. Because men are lost outside of Jesus Christ. The word *lost* comes from a root word meaning "ruined" or "destroyed" (Romans 3:10, 3:23, 6:23, 5:19; Psalm 51:5).
10. Because men are going to hell (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9). Hell is real. No one should go to hell without a witness (Psalm 9:17).
11. Because we are to be a light in a sin-darkened world (Matthew 5:14-16; Romans 2:19; 2 Corinthians 4:4). Light has a way of spreading. The truth is compared to light, and when it is shared, it will spread. Charles Spurgeon said, "We live in such a dark world that we must not waste the tiniest piece of candle."
12. Because the gospel is hidden to them that are lost (2 Corinthians 4:3; Luke 11:33). The treasure must be revealed.
13. Because it is the will of God (2 Peter 3:9; Matthew 18:14).
14. Because we know the terror of the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:11).
15. Because there is a better place. Heaven is waiting to be populated (John 14:1-3; Revelation 21:4).
16. Because Jesus is coming soon (1 Thessalonians 4:15-18; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; Hebrews 10:37; Revelation 1:7; Matthew 26:64).
17. Because we are in a spiritual battle for the souls of men (Ephesians 6:12; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, 10:3-5).
18. Because we cannot help but speak what we have seen and heard (Acts 4:20, 22:15).
19. Because we do not want the blood of sinners on our hands (Ezekiel 3:17-20; Acts 18:6, 20:26-27).
20. Because he who wins souls is wise (Proverbs 11:30).
21. Because we understand the value of a human soul (Matthew 16:26; Luke 9:25).
22. Because the love of God is in our hearts (Romans 5:5; Leviticus 19:18;

Mark 12:31). His love overflows from our lives. Our love for Him cannot be self-contained (1 John 4:7-8; Romans 5:5). We should care enough to reach out. Jesus was moved with compassion (Matthew 9:36). What about you? The church's main business is soul winning.

23. Because of Calvary (Luke 23:33).
24. Because witnesses must witness; otherwise they are not witnesses (1 Corinthians 9:16; Acts 1:8).
25. Because time is running out (John 4:35; John 9:4).
26. Because of people's lack of knowledge (Isaiah 5:13; Hosea 4:6). People are ignorant and need to be informed.
27. Because God wants people to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:1-4).
28. Because men in captivity need to be delivered from bondage (Isaiah 61:1-3; Luke 4:18-19).
29. Because if we do not evangelize the lost, cults and false religions will.
30. Because we love the unsaved. The most loving thing you can do is present the gospel to someone else (2 Corinthians 5:14-15). Evangelism shows the love of God to the world (John 3:16; 1 John 3:16).
31. Because we want to please God and bring glory to His name. Pleasing God is the chief aim of man (Ecclesiastes 12:13).
32. Because it is the primary purpose of the church (Matthew 18:11, 20:28; Luke 19:10; John 10:10; 1 Timothy 1:15).
33. Because harvest is necessary for us to exist.
34. Because evangelism produces the church (Matthew 9:37-38; John 4:35).
35. Because the gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16).

36. Because we know that what God says He means. All will stand before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10; Hebrews 9:27).

37. Because Jesus has done so much for us. It must be shared (Acts 4:20).

38. Because I cannot help but evangelize. He has done so much for me I have got to tell somebody. "I couldn't keep from preaching it if I wanted to. I would be utterly miserable" (1 Corinthians 9:16, *TLB*).

"Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay" (Jeremiah 20:9).

39. Because we are debtors (Romans 1:15-16).

40. Because evangelism is an expression of a healthy church (Acts 1:8, 8:4).

41. Because it is an honor to be His agent (ambassador). We have a heavenly invitation to share the life-changing gospel with others. We represent the King of kings and speak on His behalf (2 Corinthians 5:20; Ephesians 6:20).

42. Because evangelism could hasten the coming of our King (Matthew 24:14).

43. Because Jesus said, "I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18). Through evangelism, we help build the church.

44. Because we want to hear the Lord of the harvest say, "Well done thou good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:21).

45. Because great rewards are promised, both now and in eternity, to those that witness (Daniel 12:3; 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20).

- 46. Because the fear of the Lord compels us to evangelize (2 Corinthians 5:11; Luke 12:47).
- 47. Because we do not want the Lord to be ashamed of us (Mark 8:34-38).
- 48. Because there is no greater joy than bringing someone to Christ. Our joy is made full when we evangelize (1 John 1:3-4; John 15:11). Watchman Nee claimed that the two happiest days in every believer's life are the day he is saved and the day he leads some one to Christ.
- 49. Because involvement in evangelism produces a sense of direction, purpose and destiny for our lives (Acts 18:19-20). It gives us something worth living and dying for.

“We are debtors to every man to give him the gospel in the same measure in which we have received it.”
P. F. Bresee, founder of the Church of the Nazarene

First and Last Commands of Jesus Christ

- The first commandment of Jesus:

“And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men” (Mark 1:17).

- The last commandment of Jesus:

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

The church exists for three main reasons:

- To minister to God (relationship with God). This is expressed

through prayer, fasting, worship and Bible study.

- To minister to one another (relationship with other Christians.) This is expressed through love, fellowship and serving.
- To minister to the world (relationship with those who do not know the Lord Jesus). This is expressed through evangelism, outreach, church planting and missions. (Mark Conner, *Transforming Your Church*)

The only one that cannot be done in heaven is number three. The only reason for the church to remain on the earth is for the purpose of evangelism. There will not be any evangelism in heaven.

We populate heaven or hell by our obedience or disobedience to the command of Christ.

Obedience	Populate Heaven
Disobedience	Populate Hell

“Today...people will go to heaven, and people will go to hell. The percentage of people going to heaven and the percentage of people going to hell today is determined by how well you did your job yesterday. If you remember heaven today, it will help someone avoid hell tomorrow.”
(Primary Purpose)

D. L. Moody made up his mind that he would witness to at least one person per day. One night as he crawled into bed, he remembered that he had not preached to anyone that day. He got dressed and went out looking for someone he could talk to. It was already midnight, and the streets were deserted. He finally found a policeman still on duty and witnessed to him. The man was annoyed and scolded, “Do you not have anything better to do than disturb me in the middle of the night,

Why Not Evangelize?

“Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest” (John 4:35).

FOCUS: Explain the reasons why people do not get involved in evangelism.

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

The fields are ready for harvesting. It looks like this will be our best crop ever. But, there is a problem, or two, or three. Where are the workers? What? Some are shy; others are full of fear. Some do not believe it is harvest time; others are ashamed of being caught farming. We have a handful that say they would love to help—tomorrow. Others claim it is not their responsibility or life calling. Still others are claiming they have no idea how to farm. What will we do? The harvest is ready—now.

Discipleship Journal featured an article entitled “The Invisible Evangelist” by Rebecca Manley Pippert. She writes, “The heart of evangelism is sharing the story of Christ, the good news of how God took upon Himself the sin of the human race so that all who believe in Him might be saved (Acts 4:10-12). This message is the most liberating news to ever grace this planet. So why aren’t we shouting from the rooftops the glorious news?”

In this lesson we will address some of the reasons people do not get involved in evangelism and what can be done to counteract it.

1. Fear. This is one of the biggest enemies of evangelism. This includes fear of failure, not knowing

what to say, or of being rejected by others.

Charles Stanley in *Success God’s Way* says, “Fear is the uneasy feeling that we are inadequate. It is an alarm that goes off when we feel threatened or suddenly feel incapable.”

“The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe” (Proverbs 29:25).

- Fear of rejection.
- Fear of embarrassment.
- Fear of failure.

God is not the author of this kind of fear. Nearly 1500 scriptures address the subject of fear. God often told His people, “Fear not!” (See Psalm 34:4.)

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind” (2 Timothy 1:7).

Pippert suggests, “Our secret fear is that evangelism is really up to us. We wring our hands, close our eyes, and hope against hope that God backs us up as we dare to talk about our faith.” She claims that we have it backwards. “Evangelism is something God does; we are only instruments He uses ... God is always there first.”

We merely sow the seed; God evangelizes. He prepares the heart for the seed to be planted. Evangelism is God working. After all, He is the Lord of the harvest. Someone defined evangelism as, “sharing Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results up to God.” (See Zechariah 4:6.)

We need to have confidence in God, trusting He will destroy fear. It is better to fear God than man (2 Corinthians 5:11).

“So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me” (Hebrews 13:6).

Pray for boldness (Acts 4:29-31; Proverbs 28:1).

2. **Shyness (introverted) and inferiority complex.** This relates back to fear and the possibility of rejection.
3. **Unbelief.** Do you really believe the gospel? It has already been said that the reality of our beliefs determines the urgency of our witness. We believe, and then we witness.
4. **Ashamed of the gospel.** We have the truth, and it needs to be taken to a lost and dying world. It is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16). We have the whole gospel (Acts 2:38-39; Acts 4:12). We know the plan of salvation. The question is, “Will we let the world know?”
5. **“It’s not my responsibility.”** The saint will say, “Let the pastor do it.” The pastor says, “Let the evangelist do it!” This excuse is close to “that is not my ministry.” The great commission is a command to all Christians. Winning souls is part of the Christian life and a direct result of the baptism of the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:8).
6. **Lukewarm in relationship with God.** Needs to be moved out of the comfort zone.
7. **Out of touch with the heavenly Father’s heart.** The prodigal’s elder brother should have been able to see how far he had drifted from his father’s concerns. He had all his

father owned but did not want to share it with the prodigal son. Let us never drop into the sin of being like the elder brother.

8. **Procrastination.** “I’ll do it tomorrow.” The problem is tomorrow may be too late.
9. **Disobedience.** Failure to obey God’s Word and commands.
10. **Laziness.** Reaching the lost is work and requires discipline.
11. **Sin and carnality in the life of the believer.** Sin dulls our senses and desire for witnessing.
12. **Cannot speak well (speech impediment or language barrier).** That excuse has been used as far back as Moses. Each time you think, “I cannot,” remember Philippians 4:13.

**“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me”
(Philippians 4:13).**

13. **Lack of burden, vision, compassion, or concern.** “Where there is no vision, the people perish” (Proverbs 29:18).

“And what pity he felt for the crowds that came, because their problems were so great and they didn’t know what to do or where to go for help. They were like sheep without a shepherd” (Matthew 9:36, *TLB*).

Jesus was concerned for His world. We will evangelize when we truly care for the eternal destiny of others.

- He was moved with compassion (meaning: “to suffer with”) when He saw the multitude (Matthew 9:36). Compassion is to relate to someone’s

pain to the extent that you are willing to do something about it.

- ☑ He had a burden (John 4:34-35).
- ☑ He had a vision (Luke 19:10; Matthew 16:18).
- ☑ He wept (John 11:35).
- ☑ He died—accepted His responsibility. (Read 1 John 3:16.)

14. **Lack of witnessing skill.** “We don’t know how to evangelize. We were never taught.” Fear can be overcome through effective training. God has given us all we need to succeed.

15. **Lack of biblical knowledge.** Feeling that we do not know enough about the Bible to be an effective witness.

16. **Never mobilized.** People are waiting to be asked to be involved in evangelism.

“Why have you been standing here doing nothing?”

The answer the unemployed workers gave was, “Because no one has hired us.” (See Matthew 20:6-7.) No one had motivated or trained them.

“Sometimes people are doing nothing because no one has asked them to do something.”
W. E. McCumber

17. **Wrong priorities.** Inward focused instead of outward focused.

18. **Racial prejudice** (the feeling that nothing is good in others) can prevent evangelism (John 1:46).

19. **“I’ll just mind my own business” attitude.** Thinking that Christianity and religion is a personal choice.

20. **Thinking that one’s lifestyle is enough witness.** Winning souls involves more than a silent witness.

21. **“I’m too busy!”** Could even be busy doing things for the church but having little to do with evangelism.

22. **A bad experience** could keep a person from witnessing.

23. **Respecting other people’s rights** so decide not to witness to them. We do not want to offend anyone. We are deceived into the mindset that we should live in tolerance with others, and what they believe.

It is useless to discuss “how to evangelize” until people develop the “want to” and become involved. Evangelism, on our part, begins with desire.

Jonah is an example of someone that did not have the “want to.” God provided the fitting motivation that landed Jonah on the shores of his harvest field.

Peter Lloyd Olivia is a beloved pastor from Mauritius. He preached a message on evangelism, taken from the Book of Jonah. He pointed out that the story of Jonah has all the ingredients of New Testament evangelism.

- ☑ A vessel to preach: Jonah. The problem was that he was a reluctant vessel running from the will of God.
- ☑ A people in need of salvation: People of Ninevah.
- ☑ The great commission: “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me” (Jonah 1:2). (See also Jonah 3:2.)
- ☑ The commission executed: People believed and repented (Jonah 3:5-9).

7. Why are some churches distracted from evangelism?

8. George Verwer claims that some will not get involved in evangelism until what happens?

9. What is fear?

10. How do we know that Jesus possessed a burden?

Evangelism

Lesson Thirteen

Where to Evangelize?

"The field is the world" (Matthew 13:38).

FOCUS: Explain the various fields available for evangelism.

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

Where do we begin to share Christ? Start at home. We first share the truth where we are and with those closest to us (our area of influence).

"If a person's Christianity isn't believable at home, then there's no sense taking it on the road" (*Acts Commentary*, page 10).

The Lord established this pattern in Acts 1:8. Notice the direction given. Take the message where you are right now and start moving outward. It becomes like the ripples caused by throwing a stone in a lake. The ripple continues to move outward.

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Jesus told a story of a farmer that went out to sow his seed. The means of sowing at the time was to dip one's hand into a sack of seed and then disburse it in a spreading motion. Other farmers held their seed in an upturned garment, casting it out as they walked. Some grew. Some did not.

Where should we evangelize? Everywhere. Anywhere.

"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word" (Acts 8:4).

"And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen" (Mark 16:20).

Since the field is the world, we should sow the seed wherever and whenever we can.

Over fifty per cent of the world's population lives in cities. There are five hundred cities in the world with a population greater than one million people. Seventeen of these cities have populations greater than ten million. Seven are in the Muslim world.

Throughout Paul's ministry, he planted churches in cities. He was looking beyond the city to the surrounding region. These cities were strategically located on major trade routes. This helped to speed up the spreading of the gospel.

Cities:

1. Are open to change.
2. Have the necessary resources (including people).
3. Have potential for contact with the surrounding region and quicken the sharing of the gospel with the masses.

Jerry Richardson in his seminar, "Waking the Giant," stated that we must "train men to meet the challenge of a new day. Rural evangelism is needed in many areas. However, more and more of the population are no longer in villages, but in large metropolitan cities. How will we meet the challenge? If we are going to reach the

people, we will have to go to where they are."

Village or Rural Evangelism

Villages or small, rural towns should not be left out of the evangelism picture. Jesus cared for all people, regardless of their status in life, or where they lived. Ghana alone has nearly 15,000 villages without a Protestant church.

"And he went round about the villages, teaching" (Mark 6:6).

"And ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was. And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole" (Mark 6:55-56).

"For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village" (Luke 9:56).

"And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans" (Acts 8:25).

Each person we pass is a soul for whom Jesus Christ died. Try repeating that in your mind each time you see a person on your way home today. Say, "That is a soul that Jesus Christ died for." By the time you reach home, you will likely go to your knees, burdened for lost humanity.

Jesus reached for the lowest. He was not content with reaching the religious people. He went out of His way for those that were despised and rejected in society.

"So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the

house being angry said to his servant, 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. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled" (Luke 14:21-23).

The Modern Translation

Streets	Inner City
Lanes	Residential areas
Poor	Homeless, poverty-stricken
Maimed	Hospitals, sick
Halt	Elderly
Blind	Handicapped
Highways	Neighboring areas
Hedges	Countryside, villages



LOOKING THROUGH THE WINDOWS OF EVANGELISM

To find the lost start looking for them (Luke 19:10). Pray that the Lord will give you sensitivity for those who need to know Him (Luke 15:1-10). Look out the window to a lost world. Go ahead, and take a look. What do you see?

The 10/40 Window

The majority of unreached people in our world live in a rectangular-shaped window referred to as the 10/40 Window or the Resistant Belt. The window extends from West Africa to East Asia, from ten degrees north to forty degrees north of the

equator. It includes sixty-one countries. The Christian Information Network website (accessed 4/9/99) in an article by Luis Bush ("Getting to the Core of the Core") suggests that this window confronts us with several considerations:

1. It contains thirty-seven of the fifty least evangelized countries.
2. The dominance of Muslims (700 million), Hindus (700 million), and Buddhists (encompasses all of China with a population of 1.2 billion), representing billions of lost people.
3. Two-thirds of the world's population lives in this area (four billion people).
4. Of the world's poorest, eight out of ten live in this area. The gospel is for the poor (Luke 4:18; 6:20; 7:22).
5. Unreached people groups.
6. Least evangelized mega cities. All of the top fifty least evangelized cities are in the 10/40 Window.
7. The stronghold of Satan is within the Resistant Belt.

4/14 Window



Gerry Dueck of the Children's Mission Resource Center believes that reaching children is the key to reaching the 10/40 Window. He calls them the 4/14 Window

because 86% of people who become Christians do so between the ages of 4 and 14. This makes children and young people the "world's most fruitful field." Children are the adults and leaders of the future. To impact the future, reach the children now.

Consider the following:

- ☑ Every day 35,000 children die of malnutrition.
- ☑ Every year 40 million are aborted. Twenty-nine percent of all children are never born.
- ☑ In Africa alone there are 322 million children under the age of fifteen. This represents forty-four percent of the population.
- ☑ In South Africa 60,000 babies are infected with AIDS each year. Most of them will never see their second birthday.
- ☑ It is estimated that by 2010 there will be 40 million AIDS orphans in Africa.

George Barna in *The Habits of Highly Effective Churches* writes, "Highly effective churches are strategic in their evangelistic efforts . . . They devote most of their evangelistic resources to reaching kids. Our research shows that a majority of people who accept Christ as their Savior do so before the age of eighteen—nearly two out of three believers. Thus, focusing on young people is a wise investment of the church's limited evangelistic resources . . . These churches want to maximize their influence for Christ and therefore make the most of the apparent opportunity. Across the board these churches note that evangelism among adolescents and early teens is also a much simpler process than trying to penetrate the hardened hearts of adults."

Jesus is concerned about evangelism among the world's children.

“In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost” (Matthew 18:14, *NIV*).

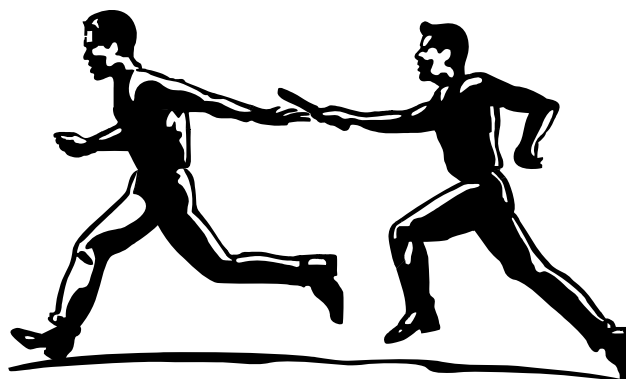
Parents and pastors need to be concerned too. A national church survey conducted by the Ghana Evangelism Committee found that “no provision for children and youth” was one of the major reasons that people stopped attending church.

15/45 Window

One of the largest unreached people groups in the world is in the 15/45 Window. These are the people infected with HIV/AIDS, most often between the ages of 15 and 45. Ninety percent of these people are without knowledge of the gospel. They die without a personal relationship with the Lord. Regardless of the circumstances that have caused them to become infected, they have a right to hear the gospel. The need is urgent.

- ☑ Worldwide 36.1 million people have AIDS and 26.1 million of them are in sub-Saharan Africa.
- ☑ It is projected that by 2005, more than 100 million people will become HIV positive.
- ☑ Only 10% of the world’s population lives in Africa, but it is home to seventy percent of the world’s HIV infected people.
- ☑ Already, 13 million Africans have died of AIDS. In the next five years, 10 million more will likely die.
- ☑ In sub-Saharan Africa, there are 5,500 funerals a day.
- ☑ AIDS kills 8,000 per day globally.

How are we doing with getting others to join in the Christian race?



Islam is reaching out to the entire world. We must reach the world with the liberating, life-changing gospel.

About 1.7 billion people in the world claim to be some form of Christian. Statistics show that Islam is increasing by 16% per year, Hinduism by 13%, and Buddhism by 10% and Christianity by only 9%. What is the fastest growing religion in the world? Ouch!

We must “go” and establish churches if we expect to evangelize the lost world.

T. F. Tenney once asked, “Which part of the word ‘GO!’ don’t you understand?”

Taking the “whole gospel to the whole world” is the task of the entire church.

The focus of the gospel is outward to a lost world. We come to church to fellowship and worship our God. However, we should not become inwardly focused by placing too much attention on maintaining programs inside the church. We come to church to worship, but we leave the church to witness. Once we walk out of the doors of the local assembly, we are in a mission field. Here we meet unbelievers where they feel comfortable—on their grounds. We cannot expect the sinners to come to the gospel. We should take the gospel to the sinners. We must be like a city set on a hill (Matthew 5:15).

Reinhard Bonnke wrote, "Observance of the Apostolic Ministry." In it he states, "The apostolic ministry can be summed up in one word: 'Go!' Our task is no smaller than that of the first apostles nor is it any different. Indeed, we can be sure of one thing: If we go as they went we shall get what they got. The task remains unchanged, and neither has God changed in the slightest degree. God will do for us what He did for the apostles if we do for God what the apostles did, because God never changes."

"And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ" (Acts 5:42).

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. Why should we start to share Christ close to home?

2. Where should we evangelize?

3. Where does over fifty percent of the world's population live?

4. Why did Paul choose cities as the place to plant churches?

5. Why does Jerry Richardson feel that it is necessary to train men to reach cities?

6. How many villages in Ghana are still without a Protestant church of any kind?

7. According to Luke 14:21-23, where should we be conducting evangelism?

8. What does the 10/40 Window mean?

9. What does the 4/14 Window mean?

10. What does the 15/45 Window mean?

11. How many people live within the 10/40 Window?

12. Why is it considered to be the Resistant Belt?

13. Where do most highly effective churches place their evangelistic emphasis and resources? Why?

14. What is the fastest growing religion in the world?

15. What are you going to do about this statistic?

16. Reinhard Bonnke claims that the apostolic ministry can be summarized in one word. What is it?

17. When will God do for us what He did for the apostles?

Evangelism

Lesson Fourteen

When to Evangelize?

"Do you think the work of harvesting will not begin until the summer ends four months from now? Look around you! Vast fields are ripening all around us and are ready now for the harvest" (John 4:35, NLT).

"There is a time for everything, a season for every activity under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to harvest" (Ecclesiastes 3:1-2, NLT).

FOCUS: Explain when to evangelize and that there are times when people are more receptive to the gospel.

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

Jesus used the picture of planting seeds and reaping a harvest to describe the ways we can reach people with the gospel.

Planters test their soils and adjust their methods to the demands of the particular soil. In the parable of the sower, only the good soil brought forth a harvest. Plant in the best spiritual soil to reap abundantly.

Farmers can tell you that the principles of harvest have not changed.

1. Everyone can be involved in the harvest work.
2. Different seeds grow at varying speeds. Some take longer than others.

3. There are seasons for planting and harvesting. If you do not reap in time, the harvest will be lost.
4. Plant when the soil is fertile.
5. The harvest varies according to the climate involved.

In Bible times families moved into the fields until the harvest was over. It was important business. Time wasted meant the crop would be wasted.

Pirkey Aboth said, "The day is short, the work is great, the workmen idle, the reward abundant, and the master of the household is urgent." (*Adam Clarke's Commentary*)

As we continue to sow the seed of the Word and water it with our prayers, people will become aware of what the Bible says and what God can do in their lives. Many are reaping the consequences of their sins and are ready to turn to God.

Not all crops ripen at the same time. The harvest determines how many workers are needed. A great, ripened harvest requires a large labor force. We have already studied that there are resistant and receptive people. While all should have the opportunity to hear the gospel, we should focus primarily on the receptive. Certain indicators show when a person will be receptive to the gospel. At particular times a person tends to be more receptive. The methods used in reaching the receptive may not work when trying to reach the resistant. The Holy Spirit knows whether a person is ready to receive the gospel. We can only judge by the fruit produced.

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Corinthians 2:11).

“For the LORD searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will reject you forever” (1 Chronicles 28:9, *NIV*).

Gentle Persuasion gives various tips for understanding when people are receptive.

People show they are ready when:

1. They enjoy being with Christian friends.
2. Their religious background and experience stops being a hindrance to them accepting truth.
3. They have responded positively to seed planting attempts by friends.
4. They become aware that the gospel may contain solutions to their problems.
5. They are curious about spiritual things.
6. They are willing to talk about their spiritual journey.
7. They include you in their activities.
8. They are willing to attend some harvest event.

C. Peter Wagner in *Strategies for Church Growth* teaches that the first indicator of receptivity is where churches are growing. If an area is experiencing church growth, it probably indicates that the people are receptive. New churches can move in to the area and reap a portion of the bountiful harvest.

The second indicator is where people are changing. This change could be social, political, economic, etc. As people encounter problems and stress, the receptivity level increases. On a larger scale when a people group suffers from political upheaval, war, famine, poverty, disease, the receptivity level increases. It is important for the harvesters to move in at the right time.

“We need to be energetically at work for the One who sent me here, working while the sun shines. When night falls, the workday is over” (John 9:4, *The Message*).

On a smaller scale a person under stress because of the death of a spouse or family member, the birth of a child, a loss of a job, personal injury or illness, pregnancy, divorce, change in residence, jail term, and a host of other circumstances is likely to become more receptive to the gospel. Why? He cannot find answers to his problems and knows that he does not possess the power to work out or change circumstances on his own. When in trouble, people everywhere tend to look outward and upward for help. We need to be there with an open ear and encouraging word.

“They reeled and staggered like drunkards and were at their wits’ end. “LORD, help!” they cried in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress. He calmed the storm to a whisper and stilled the waves” (Psalm 107:27-29, *NLT*).

At the resistant stage it is important to:

1. Build intentional friendships and relationships.
2. Do not argue with the person over religious differences.
3. Pray that God will draw them to Himself (John 6:44).
4. Pray that God will remove their spiritual blindness (2 Corinthians 4:3-4).
5. Pray that God will make their hearts receptive (John 16:8-13).
6. Pray for the opportunity to witness (Colossians 4:3-5).
7. Show them that you care by treating them with respect and as a friend.
8. Invite them to your home or to a fun church event.

9. Go out of your way to express your love for them.
10. Accept people as they are, trusting God to make them what they need to become.
11. Be ready to share the Word and your testimony. Do not get sidetracked talking about nonessential things.
12. Be patient.
13. Use crisis situations in their lives to show them how they need God.
14. Identify when the person is eager to hear about the gospel and respond accordingly.
15. Take advantage of divine appointments and opportunities that God brings across your paths. Look for the open door of opportunity.

C. Peter Wagner explains that one of the most unfortunate chapter divisions in the New Testament exists between Matthew chapters nine and ten.

Chapter nine ends with Jesus' declaration that the harvest is huge and the laborers are few. He requests that prayer be made for more workers. Jesus does not stop there. In chapter ten He explains the strategy that His disciples should follow in reaping this big harvest.

Jesus did not send them to people in general. He had specific target groups in mind. Some were more receptive (at that time) than others.

He identified three groups of people and told them to go only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

1. Jews
2. Samaritans (They were harvested in Acts 8.)
3. Gentiles (Their harvest began with Cornelius in Acts 10.)

When the disciples went into a town or village, they were instructed to look for receptive people. They were to leave blessings in their homes. He called these people "worthy." This term speaks of people that were ready to embrace the message of salvation.

If the people were not receptive, the disciples were to take back their blessings and leave, shaking the dust off their feet. This meant (to the Jews) that they would have no further association with the people of that village. This was a sign that they were protesting the peoples' resistance to the gospel. We seldom shake the dust off our feet, but we do seek out and work with groups of people that will respond to the gospel. As circumstances change, even resistant people become receptive to truth.

A biblical example of someone who was resistant to the gospel becoming receptive is Saul. He hated the church and persecuted it without mercy. He encountered a stressful situation on the road to Damascus, and with God's help Saul quickly became receptive. Several things can be learned from Saul's experience:

1. God draws people to Himself (John 6:44).
2. People move from being resistant to receptive at different speeds.
3. One never knows the true heart of a person. It was difficult for Christians to believe that Paul had been changed.

Paul was called to be an apostle to the Gentiles. He had a harvest strategy. In most places where he tried to start a church he first visited the synagogues. There he met three types of people:

1. Jews,
2. Proselytes (converts), and

3. God-fearers.

The god-fearers loved God but did not break ties with their Gentile roots by becoming a Jew. They were a ripened harvest field for Paul.

We live in the last days, and God has promised us a great harvest. Now is the day of salvation (2 Corinthians 6:2). Let us continue to witness to all.

“Be sure to stay busy and plant a variety of crops, for you never know which will grow—perhaps they all will” (Ecclesiastes 11:6, *NLT*).

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. Provide five ways people show they are ready to hear and obey the gospel.

2. What principles could farmers tell us concerning the harvest?

3. According to *The Message*, when is the best time for us to do a work for God? Why?

4. During times of harvest where did the farmer and his family move? Why?

5. What are five things that can be done to be a witness to resistant people?

6. According to C. Peter Wagner, what are two indicators of receptivity?

7. What happens as people encounter problems and stress?

8. What three groups did Paul meet in the synagogues?

9. Which group was the most receptive?

10. What is meant by "worthy" people?

11. What was shaking the dust off feet a sign of?

12. What can cause a person or people to move from being resistant to receptive?

Evangelism

Lesson Fifteen

Which Tools to Use?

"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (1 Corinthians 9:19-22).

FOCUS: Explain the difference between principles and methods. Methods of evangelism are adjusted to fit the need.

WHAT I HAVE LEARNED

Farmers are always looking for ways to improve their tools and how they are used. Tools improve efficiency and cultivation. Long ago tools of bronze and iron were considered efficient. Times and tools have changed.

**"God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply."
(Hudson Taylor)**

Civilization moves through different ages. We are living in the "information age." The ways to reach people change in different ages, but the principles remain the same.

If one method does not work, try another one. One man talked about how his great grandfather used a wooden plow, as did his father. He concluded, "And I'm going to use a wooden plow."

It is silly for a farmer to use the old methods and tools when newer, better methods are available.

Why use a wooden plow if you have a tractor? However, if you do not have a tractor, use what you have. Do not sit around doing nothing, refusing to plant, until a tractor appears. Use what is available. Farmers do.

D. L. Moody was, on one occasion, heavily criticized for the evangelism method he used. Moody answered, "I'm not too fond of it either. Tell me yours." The critic admitted that he did not have a method. Moody concluded, "I like mine better!"

Dick Eastman in *Beyond Imagination* relates, "Early in my ministry, a wise colleague and mentor told me, 'Dick, God's plans are always incredibly simple and unusually inexpensive. So if things start getting terribly complex and amazingly expensive, you might rethink whether it's God plan after all.'"

Eastman feels that the early church understood this principle. They reached their world for Jesus without financial resources and concerns (Matthew 10:9-10). They went everywhere and preached to everybody on all levels of society.

Modern equipment (tents, microphones, P.A. systems, elaborate lighting and musical equipment) is not necessary for New Testament evangelism. These things can be used when they are available. G. Randy Adams says, "God does not anoint these instruments. He anoints people who go, preach, teach, and do ...I fear that, at times, people wait for these things,

thinking without them they cannot be effective in evangelism." It is deceiving to think all kinds of equipment are needed before evangelism can take place.

The International Bible Society recently ran an advertisement that stated, "The best approach to evangelism is the one that's uniquely your own." (*Discipleship Journal*)

The best method for evangelism would be the method needed at the moment. A key to effective evangelism is to find the point in an individual's life where the gospel becomes good news, and then tailor the method or presentation to fit the need.

R .C. Sproul said, "The Gospel is news to each generation, and we must seek new ways to address our times." The gospel should be presented in fresh ways in each generation.

The children of Issachar had an understanding of the times and the methods required to meet the needs. They were in touch with their times.

"And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do" (1 Chronicles 12:32).

These men "understood the times" (1 Chronicles 12:32, *NIV*). They were in touch with the trends of the day and knew how to respond wisely.

We need to be in touch with our times and know how to serve God skillfully to reach our generation. Men of God need to be conservative enough to value the old paths of truth and liberal enough to keep an open mind and use new methods.

Hudson Taylor once stated, "We have given too much attention to methods, and to machinery, and to resources, and too

little to the Source of Power, and the filling with the Holy Ghost." (*A Force in the Earth*)

A farmer is not afraid to abandon methods that do not work. In fact, his approach is, "If it does not bear fruit, cut it down." (See Luke 13:6-9.) This principle can also be applied to methods used in evangelism. If it does not produce fruit, let us get rid of it.

Always do your best. What you plant now, you will harvest later.

A variety of evangelism methods should be used. Farmers use a variety of seeds. They do not use the same seed for every planting (unless that seed works especially well.) A sower uses an assortment of seeds. The more seeds sowed, the greater the potential for a harvest.

The farmer's greatest tool is the seed. To the evangelist the seed is the Word of God.

1. It is the power needed to move the sinner (Hebrews 4:12).
2. It is the seed that will reproduce (Isaiah 55:11).
3. It is the only book that can answer the excuses of sinners (Romans 1:20).

We do not have to compromise God's message to draw a crowd. We can change our methods. Rick Warren says, "You don't have to transform the message, but you do have to translate it."

Once you find a method that works, work the method. Just about any method will work if you make it work. It is difficult for evangelism and comfort to sleep in the same bed. Evangelism is a lot of work. It takes discipline, but it has eternal dividends.

METHODS AND PRINCIPLES

Methods and approaches to evangelism change, but the principles and priority remain the same. Principles of evangelism apply to men of God everywhere, throughout all time.

PRINCIPLES OR METHODS— WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Principles:

- ☑ They do not change from age to age.
- ☑ If they are of God, they are transcultural (for all cultures).
- ☑ They work in advanced society and in primitive cultures.
- ☑ They apply to all people, everywhere, in all situations, and throughout all time.
- ☑ They lead to success in ministry.

Methods:

- ☑ They work because principles are behind them.
- ☑ They are built on basic principles.
- ☑ They are changing local applications of the unchanging universal principles.
- ☑ They change according to culture, location, circumstances and time.

**"Methods are many,
Principles are few;
Methods always change,
Principles never do."
(Anonymous)**

The early church used a variety of methods to reach their world.

- ☑ Personal evangelism (Acts 8)
- ☑ Mass evangelism (Acts 13:14-41; 17:17, 22-33)
- ☑ Preaching (Acts 2:14-39)
- ☑ Teaching

- ☑ Witnessing (Acts 26:1-23)
- ☑ House-to-House Evangelism (Acts 2:46; 20:20)
- ☑ Cell Groups
- ☑ Urban (City) Evangelism
- ☑ Rural (Village) Evangelism
- ☑ Power Evangelism
- ☑ Prayer Evangelism

Someone asked D. L. Moody how to win souls. He replied, "Go after them!"

Paul was willing to adapt his methods of evangelism to accommodate the particular needs of his listeners. He knew that "by all means" some would be saved.

"To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." (1 Corinthians 9:22)

Jim Amy in his course *The Internet and Evangelism 101* teaches that Paul was not afraid to use "all possible means" to bring people to Christ. "Whatever it took, Paul was willing to adapt his methods, his style, his techniques as long as it would reach men and women with the saving gospel of Jesus Christ."

Throughout the Book of Acts, the believers selected methods of evangelism that fit the opportunity at hand.

We must find new and creative ways to effectively share the gospel with this generation. Utilize the trial and error method. Keep trying different methods until you find something that works for you.

Reinhard Bonnke in *Time Is Running Out* says, "The means must match the moment. People talk about jumping at the opportunity, but I think Paul kept jumping until opportunity came. The best methods are when we each do what we do best, using our own specific methods and not

imitating others." He also stated, "The gospel is you and me telling the story of Christ, whatever the chosen means of transmission."

The Boston Marathon is run each year. It is named after Marathon, a plain close to Athens, Greece. Following the victory of the Greeks over the Persians in 490 B.C., tradition says that a runner raced to Athens to carry the good news. As he reached the city completing his mission, he collapsed and died.

Jesus has won the victory. We are called to be His redemption runners carrying the good news of salvation. No cost is too great or distance too far. Get on your mark, set, go! Time is running out!

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

1. What should you do when you find that the evangelism method you are using does not work?

2. What did Dick Eastman say concerning God's plans?

3. Comment on how it is deceiving to think that all kinds of equipment are needed before evangelism can take place.

4. What is the best approach to evangelism? Explain.

5. What was special about the children of Issachar?

6. What are the difference between principles and methods?

7. Why should a variety of evangelism methods be used?

8. Comment on Paul's evangelism style used in 1 Corinthians 9:19-22.
