

Topics in Practical Theology – Lesson 6 – Evangelism

Valley Bible Church Adult Sunday School

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The Purpose of the Church

The purpose of the Church (the universal body of Christ) is to glorify God (Eph 3:21). The preeminent task of the Church is to make disciples (Matt 28:18-20; Col 1:28). This task or responsibility is not for specially gifted evangelists, pastors, or local church leaders. It is for every disciple of Jesus Christ (Eph 4:11-16).

²¹to Him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen. Eph 3:21

¹⁸And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

¹⁹"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matt 28:18-20

²⁸We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. Col 1:28

¹¹And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, ¹²**for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;** ¹³until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; ¹⁵**but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ,** ¹⁶from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. Eph 4:11-16

Disciple Making

The passage that presents our Lord's command to make disciples is Matt 28:19-20. His last command to His disciples.

¹⁹"Go therefore and **make disciples** of all the nations, *baptizing* them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰*teaching* them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matt 28:19-20

The only imperative in this passage is "make disciples" (matheteusate). "Go", "baptizing", and "teaching" are participles that modify or describe the main verb of "making disciples". These activities characterize disciple making; they are the "how" of disciple making.

"Go" is literally "having gone". It assumes an active pursuit of the lost (Luke 19:10). To whom are we to go? "All the nations", which includes family, neighbors, workmates, strangers, and even different countries. This going is to increasing spheres personally removed from myself (Acts 1:7-8): near, farther, even farther, and very far.

¹⁰"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:10

⁷He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; ⁸but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both **in Jerusalem**, and in all **Judea and Samaria**, and even **to the remotest part of the earth.**" Acts 1:7-8

“Baptizing” has to do with identifying individuals with Jesus Christ. An act of obedience by the new disciple that shows their desire to follow Jesus with their entire life. It is a sign of entrance into God's family and of pledged submission to His Lordship.

“Teaching” is not just giving knowledge, but teaching a lifestyle - to obey all that the Lord commanded.

Reminder of God's Sovereignty

God is the supreme ruler – in control of all events. He is sovereign over nature (Gen 1:1; Job 37:3-13; Amos 4:7-9); controls the rulers of nations (1 Chron 5:26; Prov 21:1) and entire nations (Psa 33:10-11; Isa 40:15); is sovereign over the course of history (Isa 46:10); sovereignly works evil for His good (Gen 50:20; Acts 2:22-23; 4:27-28); is sovereign over the plans and actions of man (Prov 16:9; James 4:13-17); and is sovereign over the hearts and wills of man (Rom 9:18)

God is sovereign in all things, yet uses various means to bring about that sovereign purpose. God, in some cases, uses man to carry out His plan (e.g. election and evangelism). God has elected certain individuals for salvation, but He uses the preaching of the gospel to bring them to Himself (Acts 10:1-5).

The Gospel

It is important to have a clear grasp of the gospel message if we are going to be active in evangelism. MacArthur says, “The gospel is the good news of God's grace to sinful mankind.” (MacArthur NT Commentary – Ephesians)

³For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 1 Cor 15:3-5

¹⁶For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. John 3:16

⁸But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Rom 5:8

¹⁷Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. ¹⁸Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. ²⁰Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. 2 Cor 5:17-21

Points of the Gospel

Grace – Eternal life (a quality of life now and quantity in heaven forever) is a free gift. There is nothing I can do to earn or deserve it.

Man – I am a sinner. I have transgressed God's law and am guilty before my Creator. My sin has caused a separation between me and God and I cannot bridge that separation on my own.

God – God is merciful, therefore does not want to punish me. He is also just and therefore must punish me because I am sinful.

Christ – Jesus loved me so much that He humbled Himself and became a man. He died on the cross and rose from the dead to pay the penalty for my sins and purchase a place in heaven for me.

Faith (Repent and Receive) – I must trust Jesus Christ alone to forgive my sin. I must turn from you sin and receive Jesus as Lord.

Leaving one of these points out of a gospel message can present a warped view of God's character, man's position before God, Christ's character or work, and the means of salvation. This can lead to presenting an incomplete gospel or a different gospel (Gal 1:8-9).

...part of the biblical gospel is now preached as if it were the whole of that gospel; and a half-truth masquerading as the whole truth becomes a complete untruth. Introductory Essay by J. I. Packer in the Banner of Truth's reprint of John Owen's "Death of Death in the Death of Christ"

Evangelism

In order for someone to turn from their sins and trust Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, they must first hear the gospel (1 Cor 15:3-5). No one can believe unless they are told about Jesus (Rom 10:14-17), therefore, believers must be equipped (1 Pet 3:15) to explain the gospel to be obedient to the Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20).

³For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 1 Cor 15:3-5

¹⁴How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!" ¹⁶However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?" ¹⁷So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. Rom 10:14-17

¹⁵but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; 1 Pet 3:15

Biblical evangelism is outreaching, that is, going out to the lost souls of this world. ... evangelism has become something to do in church, within the walls of the church building. The church today expects unbelievers to come to it, when in fact the church should go out to them. Effective outreach will take place when Christians realize that the starting point of the Great Commission is to move out from the comfort zones of ecclesiastical structures into the lives of the lost around them. From the pulpit to the pew and from the pastor to the parishioner, the perspective of evangelism must be that of a proactive, aggressive endeavor. The John MacArthur Pastor's Library, Pastoral Ministry – How to Shepherd Biblically – Outreaching by Alex D. Montoya

Motivation for Evangelism

The two primary motivations for evangelism are love for Christ and love for people.

Jesus the Christ is our great God and Savior (Tit 2:13). He sacrifices Himself for our sins. We love Him. The expression of our love is obedience to His Word.

²¹"He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him." ... ²³Jesus answered and said to him, "**If anyone loves Me**, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. John 14:21, 23

⁶And **this is love, that we walk according to His commandments** This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it. 2 John 1:6

Jesus' command to us is clear – make disciples.

¹⁹"Go therefore and **make disciples** of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matt 28:19-20

¹⁵And He said to them, "**Go into all the world and preach the gospel** to all creation. ¹⁶"He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. Mark 16:15-16

²¹So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, **I also send you.**" John 20:21

⁸but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and **you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.**" Acts 1:8

The second motivation for evangelism is our love for people. Jesus is our example of Jesus' love for mankind.

⁴But when the kindness of God our Savior and **His love for mankind** appeared, Titus 3:4

¹⁶"For **God so loved the world**, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. John 3:16

⁸But **God demonstrates His own love toward us**, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Rom 5:8

⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of **His great love with which He loved us**, Eph 2:4

¹⁶Now may our **Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope** by grace, 2 Thess 2:16

⁵and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth **To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood**-- Rev 1:5

Example of Paul's love for mankind

¹I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, ²that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. ³For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, Rom 9:1-3

¹Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation. Rom 10:1

⁷But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. ⁸Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us. 1 Thess 2:7-8

Some believers do not evangelize because they have never received instruction in how to evangelize. Others do not evangelize because they have never seen the need to evangelize. Still others do not carry on an active part in evangelism because they do not have new opportunities to share their faith. The John MacArthur Pastor's Library, Pastoral Ministry – How to Shepherd Biblically – Outreaching by Alex D. Montoya

Fishing for Souls

When Jesus called His disciples to follow Him, He told them that He would **make** them fishers of men.

¹⁸Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. ¹⁹And He said to them, "**Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.**" ²⁰Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. ²¹Going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them. ²²Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him. Matt 4:18-22

¹⁶As He was going along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. ¹⁷And Jesus said to them, "**Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.**" ¹⁸Immediately they left their nets and followed Him. Mark 1:16-18

⁴When He had finished speaking, **He said to Simon,** "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." ⁵Simon answered and said, "Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but I will do as You say and let down the nets." ⁶**When they had done this,** they enclosed a great quantity of fish, and their nets began to break; ⁷so they signaled to their partners in the other boat for them to come and help them. And they came and filled both of the boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸But when Simon Peter saw that, he fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, "**Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man!**" ⁹For amazement had seized him and all his companions because of the catch of fish which they had taken; ¹⁰and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "**Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men.**" ¹¹When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him. Luke 5:4-11

1. When we go fishing, we must be equipped with the proper tools. We need to know what the Bible teaches and learn how to share it with others.
2. When we fish we cannot just sit back passively and wait for fish to jump into the boat. We must be proactive and go after the fish. We cannot just be with other believers all the time.
3. In Biblical times there were no hooks. People fished with nets. Fishermen went after many fish at the same time and not just one at a time.

Places to Go and People to See

coworkers / supervisor / subordinates / customers / vendors / classmates / teachers / school staff / friends / parties / club members / clerks / fellow customers / sports / fitness club / neighborhood

A divine appointment at the mall can last for a few minutes.

An airplane ride can last a few hours.

An encounter on a vacation can last for days.

An email exchange could last for weeks.

An interaction with a coworker or classmate can last for months.

A neighbor or friend will know you for years.

A relative will know you for decades.

Points to Ponder

Do not hinder the gospel

Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but we endure all things so that we will cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ. 1 Cor 9:12b

³giving no cause for offense in anything, so that the ministry will not be discredited, 2 Cor 6:3

Whether you are aware of it, what you allow or disallow in your behavior affects your witness for Christ—and the world is watching. It's an issue of testimony—what your life says about God. Your testimony either tells the truth about God, or it tells a lie. The choices you make in the "gray" areas should reflect your concern not to bring offense to God's reputation but to bring Him praise instead. John MacArthur

Become all things to all

¹⁹For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may win more. ²⁰To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law though not being myself under the Law, so that I might win those who are under the Law; ²¹to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, so that I might win those who are without law. ²²To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some. 1 Cor 9:19-22

Minimum requirement

²⁵He then answered, "Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." John 9:25