

S E S S I O N

06

DO THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST

In this session, we will see that an evangelist should
pray to the Lord of the harvest, for a H.A.R.V.E.S.T.,
and for the harvest.



S E S S I O N

06



NOTES:

Discussion Starter: Share your experience from the challenge on the last page. Who did you intentionally spend time with? Did you share the gospel with them? Did you pray for them? What other things did you do to prioritize evangelism?

Evangelists should pray to the Lord of the harvest

Matthew 9:35-38

[35] And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. [36] When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. [37] Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; [38] therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." (ESV)

PART THREE: OUR ACTIVITY AS EVANGELISTS

NOTES:

1. Evangelists should pray to the Lord of the harvest to _____.
out laborers into his harvest.

- a. It's a _____.
- b. It's a command because of the _____.
- c. It's a command not only for laborers to be sent out into the harvest, but for _____ to be sent into his harvest.

2. Evangelists should _____ to the Lord of the harvest for a H.A.R.V.E.S.T.

- H _____ full of compassion
- A _____
- R _____
- V _____
- E _____
- S _____
- T _____

1 Peter 1:22

[22] Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, (ESV)

3. Evangelists should pray to the Lord of the harvest for the _____.
- a. Pray for the seed to find good _____.
 - b. Pray for the seed to be _____.
 - c. Pray for the seed to _____.
 - d. Jesus is the Lord of _____.
 - e. Jesus is the Lord of _____.
 - f. Jesus is the Lord of the _____.



The prayer of a Christian is not an attempt to force God's hand, but a humble acknowledgment of helplessness and dependence. When we are on our knees, we know that it is not we who control the world; it is not in our power, therefore, to supply our needs by our own independent efforts; every good thing that we desire for ourselves and for others must be sought from God, and will come, if it comes at all, as a gift from his hands.

Packer, J. I.. *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (pp. 17-18). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.

Homework:
Read the article 7 Practical Steps to Cultivate a Heart for the Lost and answer the response and reflection questions.

7 PRACTICAL STEPS TO CULTIVATE A HEART FOR THE LOST

The Apostle Paul famously said that his “heart’s desire” and his “prayer to God” is that his fellow Jews “may be saved” (Rom. 10:1). The problem was that these “kinsmen according to the flesh” were lost—bound for an eternity without God—which filled Paul’s heart with “great sorrow and unceasing anguish” (Rom. 9:2-3).

Because we are sinners, we can take a true doctrine (God’s absolute sovereignty) and make it incompatible with an appropriate emotion (unceasing anguish for the lost). In a sermon from several years ago, John Piper explained three ways we can experience a disconnect between the biblical doctrine and the appropriate emotional state:

1. First, the doctrine of God’s sovereignty might lead us to feel no sorrow for those who are perishing.
2. Second, the doctrine of God’s sovereignty might lead us to feel no desire that they would be converted.
3. And third, the doctrine of God’s sovereignty might lead us to give up praying that they would be saved.



But what do we do if we believe Paul's doctrine but don't share his anguish? Are there steps to cultivate a heart for the lost—a heart like Paul's?

Piper offers seven steps:

1. Never Forget the Plight

Never forget that people who do not obey Christ forfeit eternal life and go out into eternity under the wrath of God. John 3:36, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God rests upon him."

Ask yourself questions like, "If I knew that a plague was coming and I knew that my colleague had not received the vaccination to protect himself, would I not inquire why she refused? Would I not seek to persuade her that she should choose life?" Ask yourself what you would say at the judgment day if your unbelieving friend turns to you and asks you why you didn't speak to him with more seriousness about this matter of eternal life.

In other words, keep before your mind the terrible reality of entering eternity without Christ.

2. Meditate on Christ's Sufficiency

Meditate often on the complete sufficiency of death of Christ to cover the sins of absolutely anyone who repents and believes in him. Constantly be exalting Christ in your own heart for

the super-abundant grace that comes to us in his cross. Remind yourself again and again for the sake of your relatives and associates that the obedience of Christ has accomplished justification and life for all who believe, no matter how many sins they had committed before. Glory in the work of the cross for yourself, and you will begin to glory in it for others.

Think often on Paul's own testimony in 1 Timothy 1:15-16, "The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And I am the foremost of sinners; but I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience for an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life."

God saved the worst first to show us that there is hope for the rest, even if we think they are too evil.

3. Meditate on the Spirit's Convicting and Drawing Power

As you ponder the sufficiency and efficiency of the cross to cover the sins of all who believe, think also on the power of the Holy Spirit to convict sinners and draw them to the Savior (John 16:8; 6:44). Don't let yourself sink into a pessimistic frame of mind that says, "Sure, God can forgive all who believe, but they are so hard and indifferent that they will never believe." (Continued on next page...)

PART THREE: OUR ACTIVITY AS EVANGELISTS

Preach to yourself that these are the days of the New Covenant. The blood of the eternal covenant has been shed. The Holy Spirit is being poured out on all flesh. And the New Covenant promise of God is this:

I will . . . put a new spirit within them; I will take the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes.

Don't say fatalistically, "Well conversion is in the hands of God. If he wants to save, let him save." Rather say, "My heart's desire is that they might be saved! And O there is hope for the hardest and coldest sinner, for conversion is in the hands of God! "O Lord grant that they would repent and come to know the truth!" (2 Timothy 2:25-26).

Don't be pessimistic about the power of God to change sinners. When John Wesley arrived in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in May, 1742, he wrote these memorable words: "I was surprised; so much drunkenness, cursing and swearing (even from the mouths of little children) do I never remember to have seen and heard before in so small a compass of time. Surely this place is ripe for Him who 'came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.'" And God honored this kind of bold expectancy. So preach to yourself the power of God to convict sinners.

4. Think of Your Joy at the Conversion of One Lost Soul

Think of the joy you would have over one sinner who repents and turns to Christ through your prayer and witness. Paul called his converts his "hope and joy and crown of boasting before the Lord at his coming" (1 Thessalonians 2:19). And John said, "No greater joy can I have than this, to hear that my children follow the truth" (3 John 4). Let your imagination grasp the joy of being used by God to bring a person from death to eternal life.

5. Think of God's Amazing Grace to You in Christ

Think often of how free and undeserved was the grace of God that brought you to Christ. It may have been in a parent, or a friend, or a pastor, or an evangelist, or a book. But whatever it was, you didn't deserve it. Your spiritual awakening and conviction for sin and grasp of the gospel and submission to Christ were the free gifts of God's grace.

The more you see how free and undeserving God's work in your own life has been, the more you will feel that your own grace and compassion must be free to others, without respect to their worthiness. "Walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself for us" (Ephesians 5:2). When your basket is full of food that you didn't earn, and others are starving all around you, the heart

PART THREE: OUR ACTIVITY AS EVANGELISTS

says, "Freely you received, freely give" (Matthew 10:8; cf. 2 Kings 7:9).

6. Act on Your Loving Desires

Act on whatever loving desire you already have. I know from experience how difficult it is to know if you really love someone. Do I really care about the lost? Is my prayer a sham? Do I really desire that they be saved? These are good and honest questions that we have all asked. But how can they be answered? Our hearts and motives are so deceptive.

1 John 3:18-19 gives an answer.

Little children, let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth. By this we shall know that we are of the truth, and reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us.

In other words, if we don't just talk about caring for others but actually take steps to show that care, our confidence in God that we are genuine and authentic when we speak of compassion will grow. Acting on the desire that you do have will cause the genuineness of your desires to increase.

7. Pray for God to Increase Your Love for the Lost

Finally, pray that God would cause your love for the lost to abound. Listen to the apostle's prayer for us in 1 Thessalonians 3:12, "May the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all men." Love to all men is a work of God in our hearts. It is not natural to us. It is a gift of grace. Could it be that we have not because we ask not?

RESPONSE AND REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Which step resonates with you the most?

PART THREE: OUR ACTIVITY AS EVANGELISTS

Out of the H.A.R.V.E.S.T. acronym, which one(s) do you need to pray for the most? What keeps you from diligently working in the harvest?

Imagine one person in your life becoming a disciple of Jesus? Who are you thinking of? How exciting would their conversion be? How useful could they be for the kingdom? How does thinking about this encourage you to pray for them?

James 4:2 - ...You do not have, because you do not ask. (ESV) How can you develop (like Paul) a "heart's desire for them to be saved?"
