

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE FAITH

LESSON 11

EVANGELISM AND THE BELIEVER

Supplemental Class Notes

Lesson Objectives

1. To motivate us to have a heart for the lost.
2. To help us overcome the barriers that keep us from evangelizing.
3. To help us to understand our responsibility and equip us for the task.

INTRODUCTION

1. THE SMALL AND WIDE GATE

Matthew 7:13-14 - ¹³ *“Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. ¹⁴ For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.*

It remains that most people in this world are dying without Jesus and are spending an eternity in hell due to their sin. We need to develop a love for the lost like that of Christ and Paul:

- Christ had a heart for the lost; it was His purpose in coming (Luke 19:10) and He wept over a city that had rejected Him (Luke 19:41-42).
- Paul had a heart for the lost; he expended himself for their souls (2 Corinthians 12:15).

2. THE CALL TO EVANGELISM

A. The call to witness is a command.

- The command to evangelize is repeated at the end of all four Gospels
- The command to evangelize is also Jesus' last words on earth in Acts 1.

This is the mission that every Christian should be participating in.

B. The gospel is a sacred trust.

1 Thessalonians 2:4

No one of us ... can be exempted from the work of spreading the gospel because we are engaged in some other work. Good as it is, though it may be very intimately connected to the kingdom of Christ, yet it does not exonerate us from the work of endeavoring to bring sinners to Christ.

There is nothing whatsoever in the whole world compass of Scripture to excuse any mouth from speaking for Jesus when the heart is really acquainted with His salvation ... We are all called to make Jesus known if we know Him ... Let us trust in the divine energy of the Holy Ghost, and speak the truth in reliance upon His might. - Charles Spurgeon

C. Hindrances to witnessing

In a general sense, Christians are left on earth after their salvation to glorify God. In a specific sense, the main way we glorify God is through evangelism.

This is our God-given task.

If we are under divine orders to share the gospel, why do we hesitate?

Discuss the possible answers:

- **We do not need to be intimidated.**

It is not man's words that are the power of evangelism, but rather the Spirit who gives the gospel its power.

- The gospel is powerful - Romans 1:16
- Exhortation: Paul was not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God.
- Pray for boldness to speak with confidence - Acts 4:29

- It is God who converts men's souls.

It is God who converts men's souls, not the messenger. It is our job to give the message, but it is not our job to convince the person of the gospel. This is the job of the Holy Spirit.

The power that is in the gospel does not lie in the eloquence of the preacher, otherwise men would be the converters of souls, nor does it lie in the preacher's learning, otherwise it would consist in the wisdom of men. We might preach until our tongues rotted, till we would exhaust

our lungs and die, but never a soul would be converted unless the Holy Spirit be with the word of God to give it power to convert the soul. - Charles Spurgeon

- We need to know the message.

It is our responsibility to always be "ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15, memory verse).

3. THE GOOD NEWS OF EVANGELISM: THE GOSPEL

"What are the essentials of the gospel message?"

As a minimum a person must:

- See themselves as sinful before a holy God.
- Understand they are in need of a Savior to save them from their sins.
- Understand that God, through the sacrifice of Christ, is the only means of salvation.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

- Discuss the good news that Paul preached.
- Note the phrase "*for our sins*" in verse 3.

This is substitutionary atonement; the idea that Jesus paid for our sins so that we could be forgiven of them.

4. THE ESSENTIALS OF EVANGELISM

In an age that assumes the absence of absolutes, it is crucial to emphasize that the gospel is exclusive. It demands acceptance or rejection. Delay or refusal to decide is the same as rejection. If there was another way for people to be saved, God would not have sent His Son to die on the cross.

A. The basics of the gospel message

B. Most things people do not understand concerning the gospel

5. STRATEGY FOR EVANGELISM

A. Witness by your life

Even though the outcome of evangelism is completely dependent on God, there is still a great sense in which our lives must match our message.

God has called Christians to live in such a way as to display light in our lives (Matthew 5:14-16). Christians should be "blameless" and "above reproach" (Philippians 2:14-15).

Why is the witness of our lives so important?

Every Christian is a witness for Christ, all the time. The question is:

- Do you reflect godliness, bringing glory to God?
- Or, if people knew you were a Christian, would you dishonor Christ?

B. Pray

The importance of praying for opportunities to share the gospel (Colossians 4:3-4) and God will open the hearts of those to whom you are witnessing (Ephesians 1:18).

C. Use the Word of God