

EVANGELISM THEN AND NOW

ED NICHOLS

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ORDINARY PEOPLE AND EVANGELISM

EVANGELISM: A BIBLICAL COMMAND

Evangelism is the means by which ordinary people become extra-ordinary soul winners in response to the bidding of the Holy Spirit of God. Most believers soon after conversion lose their zeal to bring others to Christ. Some, who have had a recent salvation experience want others to have the same experience. They have a strong desire to tell others about Jesus as Savior. Then something happens, they quickly forget the zeal to win the world to Christ. This may be like becoming rich or famous. Once one is rich one forgets (supposition) they were ever poor. Once one is famous it easy to forget they were not famous. Once one is saved, it may be easy to forget one's previous lost condition, or worse yet that there are still people without Christ who are lost.

The Bible states in the New Testament in Rom 3.23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." In Gal 3.22 the Scripture says "But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." The Old Testament in Isaiah 55.6 says "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near."

Man's lost condition is clear biblically in both the Old and New Testaments. The biblical command to evangelize is also clear.

For God gave us not a spirit of fearfulness; but of power and love and disciple. Be not ashamed therefore of the testimony of our Lord. 2 Tim 1.7-8.

In light of 2 Tim 1.7-8 and John 9.4 "We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" one should be very busy winning the lost for Jesus.

Jesus shared the parable of the lost sheep in the fifteenth chapter of Luke to reveal how God feels about the lost. God is a seeking God for that one more who needs to be with the other ninety-and-nine sheep who are safe in Jesus. At Pentecost one hundred and twenty Spirit-filled Christians prayed for the Spirit to speak to those present when Peter preached and the Bible records in Acts 2.6 that "Every man heard them speaking in his own language" and those ten days of prayer and Spirit lead decisions added three thousand to God's Kingdom.

The time has past for Christians to wake up and pay attention to the Biblical commands of evangelism. One's previous lost condition and God's command to do the work which He has given should never be forgotten. Christians need to memorize and live by Paul's statement found in Romans 10.1, "Brethren, my heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them to be saved." It is time to "rescue the perishing."

MOTIVATING INCENTIVES

The motivating incentives found in a true burden for the lost are several. One of these incentives is that materialism and greed have replaced spiritual needs. Another is that the world is in terrible trouble, as sin is everywhere. Another is that the human race without God is doomed to degradation. Still another incentive is that the enemy of Christ are converting more people to pagan religions than Christians are to Christianity.

The world is in need of turning from materialism and greed to that of God controlled lives. People today need to replace materialism and greed with Jesus Christ who will meet their spiritual needs. Christians should be motivated to see the multitudes in need of a Savior and as Christians they need to be following the Lord's command to win the lost to the Kingdom of God. One look at the lives of people and one realize that only Christ and the power of the gospel can change lives.

Religions of all types and beliefs are growing in a world where everyone is taught that they can be god. In a world such as this, without Christ the world is in terrible trouble, as sin is everywhere. The motivating factor for Christians surrounded by false religions should be a renewed interest in revival which will wake up Christianity.

The whole world has continued to fall deeper and deeper into sin. The world and its people are rebelling against God and as a result there is crime and violence everywhere. The human race without God is doomed to degradation. Sin will rob all of society and will invade the lives of everyone. The motivating factor for Christians is to realize that sin abounds but that grace much more abounds. The Christian who confronts not only the sin of the world but his own sins as well could be taking the necessary steps to winning a lost world to Christ.

The godless movements are winning more people to their cause than are Christians to the cause of Christ. Without Christians renewing evangelical efforts to win a world full of liberal modernist to the Lord, then the world will suffer the wrath of God.

Christians need a strong motivating incentive to evangelize and share Christ with a sin filled world. The problem with society today is that the enemies of Christ are converting more people to pagan religions than Christians are to Christianity. The missionary zeal of atheist is quickly replacing the strong Christian missionary effort of years past.

Jesus assures the Christian that He will provide the power to evangelize the world. He has provided the appropriate message for Christians to deliver to a sin-sick world. Jesus said that if we will only share the gospel with the lost that He will reap the harvest. These ought to be sufficient motivating incentives for all Christians to be burdened for the lost.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Everyone must deal with the question of the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus said "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3.3). According to the Scriptures the kingdom of God is now and the kingdom of God is in the future. The Christian should be busy leading lost people to Jesus so that whosoever will can be a part of the kingdom on earth and be assured of the kingdom to come.

The people of the kingdom are those individuals who have accepted Jesus Christ work on the cross for their sins. The repentant attitude of a sinner turning to Jesus opens the gates of the kingdom of God to that person. When one allows the Spirit of God to change him and lets Jesus Christ save him he becomes a part of the kingdom of Heaven. One can enter the kingdom of God the moment he believes, but there is a growing phase which takes a lifetime of Christian commitment to the Lord.

The plan which God has for individuals to enter the kingdom is by understanding that one is redeemed by God with repentance of sin and placing their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior. This is stressed in Acts 4.12 when it says "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved". This plan is the same for everyone and there are no exceptions. By placing ones faith in Jesus Christ to save them they are joining those of old who also placed their faith and trust in God to save them.

The plan has a built in repentance clause. One must truly repent to enter the kingdom of heaven. The Bible is clear that "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13.3,5). The repentance required must be genuine. It must be a repentance which turns one from the world, and by the power of the Holy Spirit directs him follow after Christ and deny self.

The plan is permanent. When one is truly repentant of sins and turns to Jesus Christ for salvation they must change their minds about how they live and begin to serve God. One enters into the kingdom of Heaven by believing by faith that one is saved by Christ's death. His death on the cross and subsequent resurrection is the only way for us to be forgiven of our sins. Some people believe that they are saved because they have had "a feeling". However, the saving grace is not a feeling but a faith in Jesus Christ.

According to the Bible one can enter the kingdom of Heaven by having a new birth. A spiritual new birth is the only way. When one is born again, one becomes a new creature and has a new birth. This action can only be accomplished when one is changed by divine power. The regeneration of the child of God is a change from the old person to the new one in Christ Jesus. Only true repentance and turning from sin to the Savior will cause such a transformation. Repent, turn to Jesus, and enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

EXTRA-ORDINARY PERFORMANCE

PAUL THE IDEAL EVANGELIST

There are many great evangelist today, however none can compare to Paul. Paul lived a life which for him reflected Jesus and was continually witnessing in complete obedience to His Lord's command. Paul faced many difficulties and was able to continue his evangelistic thrust. One need only study Paul's methods of evangelism to learn of his vision and of the great efforts he made to add souls to the kingdom.

Paul certainly was possessed with the view of an evangelist. Paul could not stay in one place very long before he would get another vision of souls in danger in another location. Paul's conversion was quite dramatic, as was his preparation. At every opportunity Paul was learning the depth and breath of the gospel. Paul was able to lead one person to the Lord or whole provinces. He learned that God would save a sorcerer or a high ranking Roman citizen. Paul in his soul winning zeal was able to win whole cities to the Lord. Some of these cities to fall under his influence were Lystra, Derbe, Pisidian Antioch, and Iconium.

Paul would broaden his vision as he visited the cities in Asia Minor. He would receive the "Macedonian call" and remember the efforts in Galatia, Achaia, and Asia. Paul had taken the Roman Empire for Jesus and he did one person, one city, one providence, at a time. Paul's efforts even while in chains and his vision to spread the gospel world-wide has become a reality.

Paul's method of evangelism perhaps stemmed from his personal philosophy or "becoming all things to all men, that by all means he might save some," as he expresses in the first Corinthian letter. Whatever worked was Paul's method, but he put into practice his method. Paul was a one-on-one soul winner. Everyone Paul met, wherever Paul went, he would share Jesus with people, all types of people. Paul had a basic message. Paul's message always had four doctrinal points in his message to the lost. Paul believed and preached that the deity of Christ was the foundation of faith. He believed in the inerrancy of God's Word. He believed that the gospel was for all people, Jew and Gentile alike. And fourth he believed the church was given the divine task of spreading the gospel.

Paul's message about Jesus would tell of Christ deity, His atonement for our sins on the cross, that Christ was indeed resurrected from the dead, and that we have a hope, those who believe in Christ, in His return to claim His own.

Paul was quick to challenge the heresies of the day. He condemned the gnostic and attacked the Judaizers for their erroneous beliefs. Paul preached as his Master preached. Paul exhorted converts to love others even as Christ loves them. Paul was careful to instruct the believers in all types of situations. He had a word for the home, the family, for government, slavery, and even prejudice.

Paul took those he converted and transformed them into bodies of believers, called churches. Through the organization of churches Paul expected that the gospel would be instructed, that the gospel would be disseminated, and that Christ kingdom would last until Jesus would return. Paul was truly called on the Damascus road to be a soul winner for His Lord and Master Jesus Christ.

SAVONAROLA

The ministry of Savonarola, according to Cairns was that of reform. "He tried to reform both state and church in the city, but his preaching against the evil life of the pope resulted in his death by hanging."¹ The ministry of many of his forerunners of the Old and New Testament were both reformers and evangelist. Savonarola was only a reformer, but his zeal was sufficient to shake the city of Florence.

Girolamo Savonarola was a reformer of the Catholic Church. His reform was not Bible-centered and doctrinal, as was Luther's reform but was for the most part social and moral reform.

Ten years before Columbus discovered America Savonarola was a Dominican monk in the monastery of Florence. Savonarola looked at the sin of the city and plunged into religious meditation and Bible interpretation. His concern for the city was because he saw in it ungodly rulers, and a low standard of morality. His opinion of the Catholic church was that the popes, Sixtus IV, Innocent VIII, and Alexander VI were corrupt.

Savonarola must have been influenced greatly by the prophets of the Old Testament because He would predict tragedies that were to come upon the people of the town and upon the church because of their life of sin. He was so like the Old Testament prophets that for text in his preaching he used that of the Old Testament prophets. He must have been effective in his preaching for as he called sin what it was, and declared a dooms day of judgement, the people fell under conviction. Their attitudes took them to church. Their attitudes caused the burning of items deemed indecent, such as books and pictures. His preaching was so effective that the Medici family who was in power at the time fell from power temporarily. He became the dictator of Florence solely on his preaching and personality. Whatever occurred he declared it to be prophetic fulfillment.

Although Savonarola was popular, his preaching became more apocalyptic and harder to live with, until the city grew tired of living up to Savonarola's ever increasing high standards. The people had been stretched beyond their limits and revolted against morality. The Medici family returned to power and Savonarola was excommunicated by the pope. He was found guilty of heresy and sedition. He was hanged and burned in the same street where the people burned the books and pictures just a short time before his execution.

Savonarola had accomplished much. He had caused reforms in civil liberties, administration of justice, concern for the starving, and even caused taxes to be lowered. His oratory ability drew large followers but they eventually turned on him. His persuasiveness may have been in that he sincerely believed himself to be a prophet and that he spoke for God. It is clear in retrospect that reform without regeneration will not change the world.

¹ Earle E. Cairns, Christianity through the Centuries, A History of the Christian Church, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 253.

MARTIN LUTHER

German by birth to peasant parents, his father became rich by investing in copper mines, Martin Luther was intelligent and attained the Master's and the Doctorate of Theology degrees. He was Roman Catholic and dutifully called on their saints for help. His mother, a very superstitious woman passed on much of her superstitions to him. Martin Luther called on one of these saints when he feared he would die at sea. His plea to St. Anne included the statement that he would become a monk if spared his life.

His life was spared and he entered a monastery. Luther's conversion occurred after studying Augustine's and John Huss' doctrines. Luther was influenced at Erfurt during his philosophical studies to begin to believe in the need for divine intervention if anyone would be saved. He was looking for salvation and couldn't find it in Catholicism. He slowly developed the realization that the authority of God was not the Roman Catholic church, but the Bible was the true authority of God. Luther was then saved by his study of the Scriptures and developed his theological system around sola scriptura. "The just shall live by faith." became his motto and the corruption of the pope and priest became his cause. In 1517, when Tetzel began to sell indulgences, which according to Tetzel gave complete forgiveness of all sin, Luther condemned these abuses openly.

By October that year, 1517, Luther set in motion the Protestant Reformation when he nailed his religious propositions to the door at Wittenberg cathedral. In this famous document was Luther's challenge to debate anyone on the abuses of the indulgence system. Excommunicated by the pope Luther made himself the chief reformer of the Roman Catholic Church.

For the rest of his life, Luther preached the doctrine of salvation and opposed whatever was taught by the Roman Catholic Church. Luther was a preacher, great teacher, scholar, and a debater. He was at odds with the theology taught by the Roman Catholic Church and would debate with other Protestants where they differed from his beliefs.

Luther was extremely effective in his evangelistic preaching. His preaching was that of what the scripture had to say about the doctrine of grace. He was effective enough to spread his teachings throughout all of western Europe. Luther's influence on the Lutheran denomination can be seen in their beliefs even today. They have taken his doctrine of salvation by grace through faith, his belief in consubstantiation, infant baptism, and even state church.

The Roman Catholic church believes that the reformation is the results of the heresy of Martin Luther. Protestantism is a heretical schism according to them and they have difficulty realizing that the Roman Catholic church had drifted far away from the New Testament and had become depraved in dogma and extremely self centered.

Martin Luther did not single handedly start the Protestant Reformation. There were many causes and many reformers. One of Luther's colleagues, a leader in the reformation movement, was Calvin. The reformation was complex, necessary, and world changing, Luther was certainly a major contributor in the process of religious reform.

THE MINISTRY OF JOHN AND CHARLES WESLEY

John Wesley "the brand plucked from the burning" as he liked to put it was the fifteenth of nineteen children. John's membership in the "Holy Club" with his brother became the leaders of a group of students which were called Methodists. John was saved after hearing a reading from Luther's preface to his Commentary on Romans. Not only was John influenced by Luther, but he was also influenced by George Whitefield. It was Whitefield that got John started on his preaching all over England. John supposedly preached about 42,000 sermons, and wrote about 200 books. In addition, John is credited with organizing his followers into a society which became known as Methodist. The societies were divided into seven circuits in England, and subdivided into classes of ten with one spiritual leader for each group.

After John separated himself from Whitefield the Methodist church adopted an Arminian theology. John believed and stressed justification by faith with an instant regeneration. He believed in Christians becoming more and more perfect. John was also influenced by German Pietists and Moravian Brethren. He accepted James Arminius views of predestination and reject that of Calvin. Arminianism is still a part of the Methodist church.

John's preaching was that the gospel should impact society. John's preaching impacted England with a revival which preached against liquor, slavery, and war. John's preaching had an influence on the people and he is given credit for the lack of insurgence on the part of the workers as occurred in France.

After John's death the Methodist church separated itself from the Anglican church but kept some of its episcopal polity and kneeling at the alter for Communion. John was the leader of five-hundred and eleven preachers and over one hundred twenty thousand members in his societies. He is clearly considered the founder of the Methodist church (societies) movement.

Charles Wesley was part of the leadership of the "Holy Club" with his brother John and received the nickname "Methodist" for their Bible and prayer habits. Charles was saved two days earlier than his brother John.

Charles was part of his brother John's and George Whitefield's open air meetings. Charles wrote hymns for the meetings. He wrote over six thousand of them. We know his song Hark! The Herald Angels Sing, and Love Divine. He is noted for not writing hymns which did not rhyme with Scripture passages as was common in his day.

When John went to the mission field of Georgia with General Oglethorpe, Charles was by his side. This work with the indians proved unsuccessful as a missionary endeavor. As a revivalist John was the preacher, Charles the song leader. Never leaving England they influenced the world.

THE 1857-58 REVIVAL

The revival of 1857-1858 is reported to be a most important period of Christian history since the ministry of the apostle Paul. It is reported that millions of people were given the opportunity to receive the gospel. Mission doors were opened as never before. According to Cairns² it all started with a man named Jeremiah Lanphier holding a prayer meeting with six people. The location was Fulton Street, New York City. It was held at noon so businessmen could attend. Cairns calls it "a lay interdenominational prayer based revival."

Prosperity preceded this revival and for the ten years before the revival great events took place. Events like, the discovery of gold in California, railroad expansion west, industrial growth, cities grew in population, and sin abounded. Churches had lost people to the world of sin. There was little or no prayer in churches and little or no power.

Late in 1857, October, the world of finance fell apart. Wall street had hit bottom. The world panicked and depression stopped all activity. The human condition was desperate and the only thing anyone knew to do was to pray to God for help in this crisis hour. A group of New York businessmen started a prayer meeting. The meetings swept the nation. Everywhere one went there were prayer meetings lead by businessmen. In the first six months it was estimated that ten thousand noon day prayer meetings were taking place in New York. Cairns states that there were "between 500,000 and 1,000,000 people added to the church, with the Methodists gaining most of the new members."

God heard the prayers of his people all across America. Millions of people joined the churches. Missionary areas opened up outside of the United States. They opened in Mexico when the Roman Church was overthrown by dictator Benito Juarez. Central America was opened up to missionaries. Livingston began his tour of Africa with the gospel message. India was opened up to missionaries when India was transferred to the British government. China, with its 400,000,000 people was opened with the signing of the Treaty of Tientsin.

It should be noted that when God's people obey Him, and humble themselves, and pray, that He will hear their prayer, and answer by sending a great revival.

²Cairns, *Christianity*, 419.

EVANGELISM OUTREACH METHODS THAT WORKS

OUTLINE OF FULL PROGRAM OF EVANGELISM

To have a full program of evangelism in a local church all organizations within the church need to be alert to thinking and doing evangelism. Sunday School, training, music, women and men organizations, all have a part to perform in reaching lost people through their activities. Each organization should be constantly motivated to think soul winning, evangelism, and the need for reaching the lost for the Lord and Savior. The Great Commission should be a major part of each organization's mission, if not the primary mission.

Below is a monthly evangelistic calendar which combines a number of departments with evangelism activities each month.

JANUARY

The new year is a good time to increase contact with inactive church members. This may be a ministry time since some may have fallen away by neglect.

FEBRUARY

Encourage evangelistic training for soul winning. Plan instruction in soul winning at different times so all may attend.

MARCH

Do special promotions by women's groups, men's groups, music, Sunday School, and training departments with strong encouragement on outreach to lost community.

APRIL

A new church orientation program which familiarize new converts with the need to actively seek lost people for Christ may be timely and provide a need for continued church orientation or soul winning instruction of new converts.

MAY

In southern states this may be a good month for an evangelical crusade, revival, or soul winning campaign.

JUNE

Summertime is a good time for a neighborhood survey to determine religious affiliation, encourage strays, evangelize the lost and minister to your community.

JULY

The holiday for independence is a good time for outreach to the community through a special independence day celebration. Combine the themes of freedom with that of Christ sets men free from sin.

AUGUST

Before school gets started again a Vacation Bible School should be completed and effectively utilized to bring children to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Arrange baptism's with decision makers.

SEPTEMBER

A good time to consider contacting the people who attend Sunday School but do not attend training to determine what programs of an evangelistic training nature would be of interest to them. This could encourage attendance at training by those who attend Sunday School on a regular basis.

OCTOBER

October or the first month after promotion would be a good time for the Sunday School teachers and officers to compare their classroom attendance with that of the total church in each classes age group. New prospects for Sunday School evangelism are found with this method.

NOVEMBER

This would be a good time for the youth of the church to have a youth led revival. School slump time just before the holidays can used to renew youth's hearts for the lost. An active participation by the youth in the preparation and planning for reaching lost youth is a must.

DECEMBER

This month is especially important for reemphasizing why we celebrate Christmas at all. Sharing the gospel with the lost at Christmas time could be the greatest gift a church could give to a person.

A CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP

The sin of not being a witness is surely a real sin. Jesus gave each believer a requirement to make disciples and each believer needs to be doing what is required of them. Not witnessing is clearly a sin since we have all been called to make disciples by our Lord Jesus Christ. With so many different opportunities to share Jesus with the world it is a pity that not more is being done to evangelize the communities around us.

One could use several methods of reaching the lost if one truly desired to do the Lord's will. No restriction exist on who, how many, where, or when one can be saved. Christian's need to believe that one sins by not witnessing. Disobedience is a grave problem. When one is commissioned by God to witness, and does witness, one disobeys.

The witness can be done within the mass media structure. It can be done personally, or as a responsibility within a church setting. Radio and Television, as well as, the new methods using the information highway can be used to share the gospel. Printed materials invade our homes all the time. Perhaps the Christian community should recognize the importance of using this medium for sharing with people Christ's love. Billy Graham and his mass evangelism is wonderful but people are to be won to Jesus one at a time. Some evangelistic opportunities are in hospitals, nursing homes, jails, and even at ball games. Bible studies in the home, at church, or at a mutual location which is un-religious in nature should eliminated some barriers for some people.

The church member should be aware that they are by the grace of God a saved and born again believer because someone shared Christ with them. It is a twenty-four hour a day job to share Jesus with people and to witness continually to a lost and dying world. It is not the job of the preacher to be the only evangelist in the church. According to 2 Timothy we are all called to do the work of an evangelist. The moment we are saved we are qualified to tell someone else about Jesus. Jesus witnessed one on one and we should do likewise.

It may be that even if we lead someone to a saving knowledge of Jesus we fail in the rest of his plan in that we do not disciple them. People who are disciples have a knowledge of Jesus which assist them in daily living. Perhaps, we are amiss by not realizing that as Christians we sin when we do not tell others that Jesus is the answer to our needs. We sin because we become complacent after we are saved. We sin because we fail to do the Lord's command to "disciple everyone." When we are not constantly seeking the leadership of the Holy Spirit to direct us to a lost soul to whom we might share the gospel we are sinning. Not being a witness, is being a witness! Not telling others about the Savior, is saying more than you know.

A SOUL-WINNER'S INTERVIEW OF A LOST FRIEND

The interview of a soul-winner with a lost friend must start with the proper preparation for the visit. Enlist someone to join you who you know to be a confident prayer warrior, soul winner, and appropriate companion.

Be sure to begin the journey with a prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Pray specifically for the individual or people who the Spirit may be leading the team to visit.

Identification at the home is important. Today people are extra careful who they allow in their homes. It is quite simply to tell them who you are and that you are visiting from a particular church which you identify for them. Ask permission to come in to see the individual you desire to lead to the Lord.

While in the home, pay close attention to any courtesies which you may extend in order to be a gracious guest. Take a moment to notice any accomplishments which provide common areas of interest for later discussion.

When asked to sit down, attempt to place yourself in an eye to eye relationship to obtain proper responses. Request that any extraneous noises be eliminated before beginning the announcement of why you are there. That would be turning off of the television or other distractions.

It is imperative that you come directly to the point of your visit. Do not side track the soul winning attempt for the sake of conversation. The author of the text for this course recommends that the "man's salvation be under discussion within three minutes after sitting down."

Most would be soul winners get cold feet because they believe they do not know what to say to the lost person. Some tips for getting past this stumbling block are as follows: First, assume the best of all people. Ask a question concerning previous church membership or a conversion experience which will cause individual to discuss his lack of church affiliation or lack of soul winning knowledge. This questioning will usually bring out a response which can be followed up on easily by the soul-winner. Second, if a previous church background exist, pursue present church involvement, or lack thereof. If no previous church involvement, ask if they would be interested in hearing what church involvement entails. Often someone will express an interest in knowing more about the church in an attempt to learn more about Jesus. Church membership questions can be answered by stipulating the first requirement of church membership, that of being born again.

During the interview, attempt to ask questions which will keep your lost friend in the direction to say "yes" to Jesus. Eliminate all extraneous variables. Do not discuss any theology, doctrine, or what ifs. Don't argue or debate any personal opinions. Remain on the task of sharing Christ with the individual. Most excuses can be overcome. But be prepared to end the interview should the person appear to be not willing to cooperate with you. Strive hard for the decision. Present Christ. Request decision. Let the Holy Spirit do His work on all present.

Ask permission to pray after decision is made before leaving the home. Schedule a follow-up meeting for making disciples and information gathering. A return visit could result in more than the initial soul being saved. He may influence his whole family and many friends.

REVIVAL PREPARATION

Revival preparation requires a considerable amount of hard work and must be accomplished with deep concern for the spiritual welfare of the people both within and outside the church. A recognition that a revival is just a revival without the leading of the Holy Spirit will help one to understand that we are working to bring souls into the kingdom of God and that reliance on the leadership of the Holy Spirit is imperative.

The first step in any revival must be prayer. Whether it is prayer, following an annual revival, or prayer for a revival that is planned for the near future. Prayer will be the most important part of the planning process for holding a revival.

Leavell³ breaks up the revival preparation into six parts. These parts he calls "organize", "visualize", "agonize", "evangelize", "utilize", and "criticize". Under each of these parts are sub-parts. Most of what is needed for revival is found in the first part called "organize".

The first thing after prayer is to allow the pastor the privilege or responsibility to select the revival preacher and the song leader for the revival. It would help considerably if the preacher and song leader selected were both known by the pastor.

The second thing after prayer, is to determine an appropriate time in the calendar to schedule the revival. This may be one of the difficulties of holding a revival, that of finding time in every one's schedules to be "revived."

The third item after prayer which needs attention is strike a match to get the revival fires burning. The pastor needs to endorse the event at every opportunity. The people need to share with the community the vision they have for this special event.

The last aspect after prayer, would be to enlist as many committee leaders as possible. The more individuals directly involved in the "happening" of the revival the greater the opportunity for success. The committee leaders should enlist as many workers as necessary to make their committee function as needed. Some committees that may be needed are prayer, ushers, counselors, music, food, and outreach. Other committees and their leaders can be added when it is determined that they are needed.

Along with prayer as a key element must come the deep realization of the people of human need. The vision of a lost world which is to be reached for Christ should cause a reflection on how one would reach so many. Setting goals which are attainable and which can be recognized when accomplished is a good approach to this part of revival preparation. Get a vision, get a goal!

Every means, time, prayer and energy should be devoted to preparation if a revival is to take place. Self-preparation is always important. Individuals who would see a revival in their church must first catch the vision, and their hearts must be revived long before the days of the revival. Lost persons should be cultivated for Christ, long before the revival preacher arrives.

After the revival every effort should be made by all departments and people in the church to assimilate the new converts. Disciplining is the key to church growth after a revival, not the returning to the same old ways.

Lastly, look at every aspect of the planning, preparation, and preaching to determine if it was successful in reaching the vision of the people. Ask hard questions, and look for the answers. One question should be "Was there a revival or just another meeting?"

³Roland Q. Leavell, Evangelism: Christ's Imperative Commission, (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1979), 146-153.

LAY EVANGELISTIC WITNESSING

Jesus provided us with the method which should be used for lay evangelistic witnessing. The Bible records the calling of the apostles and their training for disciplining. After they were trained they were sent out to use their training. The success of the apostles is found in the later reference to Jesus sending out the seventy disciples to witness and make disciples.

The training of disciples for lay evangelistic witnessing was commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ in the Great Commission. What most people fail to see, is that the Great Commission tell everyone to "make disciples". Too bad, that the majority of born again believers somehow, believe it is only for the pastor, or those individuals who God has gifted with evangelical witnessing abilities. It should be made clear to all the members of the church today that they are the witnesses which Jesus has called to the harvest fields, not someone else.

No matter how one feels about witnessing, the selection of lay witnesses should be conducted with the utmost care. Trained or not, there are people who are willing to be used of God to show Jesus light, and they should be encouraged to spread the good news. The Lord selected those individuals which He could use to His glory. Today, a similar selection or enlistment should be conducted. The selection could begin with the deacons, Sunday School teachers, other lay leaders in the church.

Training is important in anything which one does. Lay witness training is equally important. Lay witness training can start within the church programs, such as, Sunday School, and Discipleship Training. All training should be on a practical basis where possible. Prayer and Bible study are good, but the purpose of lay witness training is to put a soul winner into the field for the harvest of souls. That is usually not accomplished if we spend all of our time in training and with no hands on experience.

The total process described above is as follows:

Every Christian has been called to do lay witnessing, and need training. Training should include some actual witnessing, book training and class room experience. The total experience of lay evangelistic witnessing is to allow the lay person the actual experience of leading someone to Jesus.

Once a lay evangelistic witness is successful in leading someone to their Savior they may continue to be hesitant about the process, but generally, they will be ready for another soul winning opportunity. In training it should be emphasized that we live in an evangelistic witnessing opportunity environment at all times. We have Holy Spirit lead evangelistic witnessing opportunities everyday. We need to seize the moment for the Master.

LIVING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

New converts can be taught by the church the essentials of how to live the Christian life. These essentials should include the development of a prayer life, how to study the Bible, sharing their faith, and should assist them in finding their gifts to aid in their ministry.

This time of training has been described as providing care and nurture to a new born. The new born in Christ need to be given the appropriate encouragement if they are to mature and grow in their Christian life. This growth is a life long process and needs a good solid foundation.

Most new Christians have become that way because someone took an interest in them. They have had a relationship with an other Christian which showed care and understanding for them as a person who needed Jesus. All new converts need a continuing relationship with someone who can provide a caring atmosphere for the development of the Christian life of the new convert.

Some of the ways that this is accomplished has to do with the willingness of the church to fulfill its role in the process of making disciples. The starting place for any church related Christian life development should start with the pastor. When the pastor is responsible for finding and building relationships between people it will be noted that making disciples is a priority of the church. The pastor has several ways of accomplishing his role. One way is to be sure that he personally visits with each new member as quickly as he can after they join the church. He may follow this up with a letter which could contain literature concerning the church, or even the baptismal certificate. He can be the one who delivers a book which is bought by the church for each new member. Another way would be to have a monthly new members recognition meeting. This could be a reception of some kind where the new church members will have time to be met by other members on an informal basis. The pastor needs to take the time to discuss the essentials of a Christian life with the new member. Instruction in how to live a Christian life from the pastor goes along way.

Other leaders within the church can show an interest in the new member's Christian life development. The deacons need to seize this opportunity to meet with this individual. It may be that this is accomplished by a formal plan such as found in some churches. A formal plan could be the assignment of a deacon to minister to the new member until the new member is able to minister to others. An informal plan would be at least a contact with a deacon to show they are pleased that the new member has made an appropriate choice for church growth and development.

The Sunday School is still the strong part of any church and contact by a Sunday School teacher to every member of the new members family would show an emphasis which is placed on Bible study by the church. This works well when a personal visit is scheduled and allows for a question and answer period prior to the beginning of the program on a Sunday morning.

Assigning an individual or family to be a friend an associate to the new member and family is a good way to handle the teaching of a new convert. These people will provide answers to questions, some unasked, and can be a guide through what everyone seems to know and understand except the new member.

There should be a formal orientation and acclamation into the new church and should be started as quickly as possible after conversion. This orientation can cover all the necessary items as prayer life, studying the Bible, sharing one's faith, and finding their ministry.

SELF-DISCIPLINE FOR THE SOUL-WINNER

Self-discipline for the soul-winner begins according to Leavell⁴ "within their own will, directing them in personal efforts to win souls." He believes to become a soul-winner "one must engage in rigid self-discipline." This self-discipline has four major areas.

The first area is a genuine concern for people. Christians who are sincerely desiring to be soul-winners will be constantly looking for opportunities to share the gospel. They will have a compassion for the lost world without Christ and will attempt to share Him with everyone he meets who doesn't know Him as Lord and Savior. They will be filled with the gift of compassion for others as given by the Holy Spirit and will use that compassion to see and be concerned for the lost. This compassion will become a passion. Soul-winners will seek to imitate Christ in reaching lost people. They will take the Great Commission seriously and will develop a hearts desire to see people saved. The successful soul-winner will be one who believes in intercessory prayer and who makes it a daily habit to seek the will of the Lord in prayer for lost souls. Using the method of prayer as a foundation the soul-winner should develop a prayer list of lost souls. They should begin a strong visitation program which will become a habit. They should attempt to have a partner in the soul-winning endeavor. Persistency will in visitation will pay off in souls for the Savior.

The second area is that of recognizing one's own personal problems. In addition to the rigid self-discipline and Spirit-filled approach mentioned above, one must recognize that a number of personal problems may hinder them from being soul-winners. Fear may be a real enemy and should be dealt with in the power of God. One may realize that you will not win everyone and that some will scoff, but that some will be saved. Fear of failure will be overcome by trying to remember that the Lord says, "fear not, for I am with thee" (Isa.41.10). Just attempting a witness will help eliminate some fear. Believing one's self to be unable to answer questions or just not being willing to be sent of the Holy Spirit must be overcome. Becoming consistent in one's personal life will go a long way in development of a soul-winning strategy. Approach all situations with tact. Do your best not to drive people further away from the gospel. Be assured that the gospel will do its job of convicting, if one is faithful to deliver the message.

The third area is to be an overcomer of one's personal problems. Love for people, as Jesus loved us, should motivate one to reach out to people. Trust in the Lord that He will make you what you need to become, will come to pass. Continue in prayer and personal involvement (actually trying to win someone), and an openness to the leading of the Holy Spirit will provide one with the strength to overcome their own personal problems and be a soul-winner.

The fourth and last area includes the need to personally pay the price required of a soul-winner. If one is to be a soul-winner they must not overlook the cost involved in the process. They will need a life-style consistent with Christian living. They will need to make soul-winning a priority in their lives. Prayer will need to become a life-style, and faithfulness to a local church for personal growth and development must be a matter of service to one's Savior and Lord.

These activities, if followed, will change one sufficiently that they may become a soul-winner and hear "well done, thou good and faithful servant."

⁴Leavell, Evangelism, 184.

EVANGELISTIC PREPARATION FORMAT

Evangelistic preparation format or "how to get started with the soul-winning interview" begins with relationship building and demonstrating a soul-winner life-style.

The most important approach to beginning an interview is to remember to be yourself. Use good common sense and try to remember how it felt when you were on the other side of soul-winning experience (lost).

Demonstrating a concern for the lost friend you have been praying for is a good step to take toward presenting Jesus.

When presenting the message, make every attempt that the message is the only thing which is heard. Any extraneous distraction will cause problems with concentration.

The best approach is probably to use a non-threatening approach. Ask questions which the individual can answer without much difficulty. Try to ascertain any previous church or religious affiliations. This can be theirs or a parent or relatives. You want to talk church as they know it.

Let them tell you their relationship with Jesus. If they aren't sure they have one, they will tell you.

Remember this interview is conversation. This is exchanging information among two friends. Debate is never soul-winning.

A personal testimony is tried and true. Someone can hear your testimony and relate it to their own experience and may be able to ascertain if they in fact have had a similar experience. Above all relax. God's love speaks for itself.

This may be a little over simplified, but remember, you compel (present the gospel), the Holy Spirit convicts (does the saving), and Jesus collects (picks up His sheep). You are just a messenger, crying in the wilderness.

Make certain that whatever appeal you make, however, you make it, that it is made from your heart, and never from your head. A heart felt "you need to be saved" goes much farther than a memorized, head knowledge, recited outline.

EVANGELISTIC OUTLINE

First and foremost don't read a method. It is better just to relive a life changing experience, yours.

Tell them in your own words what the Scriptures say, they don't need a reference. If they want to see the actual words, just look it up and let them read it to themselves. Holding God's Word has convicting power!

I. Why am I discussing something so personal with you? Because I care where you spend eternity. The Bible says everyone sins and that without forgiveness for sin we will perish. The penalty for sin is death. If needed this is found in Rom 3.23 and Rom 6.23.

II. Jesus paid the penalty for sin with His death, burial and resurrection. One can be saved by excepting the gift of eternal life. This is found in John 3.16 and Ephesians 2.8.

III. Just believe in your heart that Jesus died for your sins that you might have eternal life. Express repentance for those sins and you can be saved. John 3.18 and Luke 13.3.

IV. Call for a verbal statement of repentance and turning to God through Jesus Christ. Romans 10.9-10.

V. Follow-up interview with an explanation of commitment and church membership. Begin the disciple making process here. If needed this is found in Romans 12.1-2.

LEADERSHIP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN WITNESSING

Attempting to witness in one's own power is futile. One must be completely reliant upon the power and leadership of the Holy Spirit, if one desires to see souls saved. The importance of being anointed by the Holy Spirit in soul-winning should be recognized by reading Luke 4.18. If Jesus felt it necessary to have the Spirit of the Lord upon Him, we surely must need that same Spirit even more. As Christians one can use all the means available to bring people to Jesus, but the Holy Spirit will do the bidding and make the change in each life as He see fit.

The wonderful reality of the Holy Spirit is that He is present everywhere. He is present in each circumstance where He is allowed to bring salvation. The Bible says, that it is the Comforter that "shall testify of me" and that "ye also shall bear witness" (John 15.27). With the assurance of the Holy Spirit's presence and leadership we should be able to witness. Knowing that we have a Comforter, or paraclete, one who is beside us we can do all things through Christ who will strengthen us with the power of the Holy Spirit. It should be a part of any witnessing plan of all individuals to become totally dependent on the power provided by the Holy Spirit to accomplish the task of witnessing.

Knowing that the more one exercises their faith in the power of God the greater their faith becomes. When one accepts this Holy Spirit given power and uses it to witness, their faith is increased as they see the demonstration of power in souls saved.

A soul-winner in witnessing can merely present the truths of the scriptures and then depend on the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit to reveal to the unsaved that which they must know to find Jesus Christ as Lord.

According to John 16.7-8 it is the Holy Spirit using the Word of God to speak to the soul and spirit of the lost individual. The Holy Spirit will do the convicting of the lost person. The Holy Spirit will show each of them their sins and call for a decision of repentance. Unless the lost person exhibit a spirit of repentance, his unbelief will cause the separation of his soul from God. It is the Holy Spirit's desire to break down that barrier of separation between the lost and the Savior Jesus Christ.

Conviction that there will be a judgement is part of the power which the Holy Spirit uses as shared the gospel with the lost. People must be made aware that they will die someday, and after death is the judgement. The Holy Spirit will speak these truths about death to those lost souls who will listen.

The Holy Spirit uses His power to draw people to Christ. John 6.44 says that unless the Spirit draws them they cannot come to Jesus. The Holy Spirit can take a life of sin and death and transform it into a regenerated spirit. Soul-winners need only obey the Holy Spirit by taking the Word of God to the lost, the Holy Spirit will do the rest. Witnessing wins the lost for Christ.

DEALING WITH EXCUSES

When dealing with excuses given by the unsaved, one should be aware that they are given by certain types of people. Leavell on page 225 of Evangelism: Christ's Imperative Commission list several types for which he states there is scriptural answers to their spiritual problems. He list the types followed by the scripture which he finds applicable. Some are stubborn, skeptical, procrastinator, half-interested, will not surrender, worldly, wicked, and atheistic. These types according to Leavell also have "timeworn", "hackneyed", and "foolish" excuses which they subject Christians to, each time they are approached for a salvation decision.

These excuses which the unsaved use on soul-winners should have at the top of the list that "they don't want to be a hypocrite like those down at the church." Any of the excuses can be answered by Scripture. In fact, it is Leavell's opinion that they are only answered by Scripture. Over the years Leavell has found that the excuses given are "oft-repeated." If the soul-winner will just use the Scriptures to show the excuses for what they really are, they could be successful in eliminating the excuse.

Leavell believes that excuses are just "camouflage for sin." They are excuses for not giving up prejudices, erroneous religious views, or their doubts. It could be that when confronted with the reality of God, that the Satan lead individual depends on any excuse which will hide him from his sin. The prejudices may be that they do not wish to like or associated with those "Bible thumpers." They may as well have determined that their religious view is sufficient for them to believe in and are in no pre-disposition to change their religious view for that of another persons. It may however, be even deeper than either of the two problems mentioned. It may be, just plain, doubt. These doubts can range from doubts about God, to doubts about self. They can include not knowing if they are ready to make the complete self-sacrifice which they feel is necessary to be a Christian. Doubt may enter into the thinking, as to whether, they will be accepted down there with all those Christians. After all, they all know the sins which "I have committed." Some of the doubts may be turned into legitimate excuses for self-protection in an area which causes a great deal of discomfort. An area filled with a lack of knowledge as to expectations and requirements.

One of the excuses that is right up there with "not wanting to be a hypocrite" is the excuse that "I am just as good as the next guy." They need a look at Romans 3.10-23. Unsaved good guys go to hell, saved good guys have eternal life. It is not a question of their goodness, but a reality of God's goodness and grace to forgive a sinner. The "someday" excuse has probably been one of Satan's favor lines that he feeds the unsaved. "Someday, I will say, yes to Jesus." What they do not realize is that, today they have said no, to Jesus. By that action according to John 3.18, they are condemned already. For them, there is no "someday." Today is the day of salvation.

One of the best defenses as a soul-winner may be simply to say "putting all excuses aside, what will you do with Jesus."

Ed Nichols is a retired university administrator, is an author, teacher and pastor. Nichols holds two earned doctorates. His degrees include a Doctor of Ministry from Luther Rice Seminary, Doctor of Philosophy from Saint Louis University, Master of Education and Bachelor of Arts from University of Missouri at St. Louis.

Other writings;

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Sermons for Sundays.

The Decree of God.

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