

The Evangelism Of Jesus

Introduction. The evangelism of Jesus consists not only of the work done by the Master Himself, but of the work to be done at His command by His followers. The evangelism of Jesus began with His personal ministry and continues through His followers to this present time and is to be carried on until His purpose is fulfilled.

In this lesson we will explore the evangelism of Jesus in three segments: the work done by the Master Himself (Luke 19:10), the special work done by His inspired followers (John 20:21) and the work to be done by un-inspired followers (Matthew 28:19).

I. *The Personal Work Of Christ*

- A. Jesus was prepared for the task.
 1. He had a complete knowledge of the word of God. It was always on His tongue and no enemy could ever trip Him in its use (Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 7:6-13).
 2. He prayed and had direct communion with the Father until He came before the people to tell them of the Father, as one who has just been in His presence (Mark 1:35-38; Luke 6:12; 11:1).
 3. He had a complete knowledge of nature, as witnessed by His illustrations from every feature of nature around Him (Matthew 13:1-52).
 4. He knew men and women in their everyday life and thinking, as witnessed by His keen analysis of the life and thinking of every class of people (Mark 10:17-22; Luke 12:13-21).
- B. Jesus prepared His hearers for His message.
 1. Almost His every recorded physical act was made to prepare the minds and hearts of men for His spiritual message.
 - a) He fed men on loaves that they might then hear of the bread of life (John 6).
 - b) He asked for a drink of water that He might tell of the water of life (John 4).
 2. He took advantage of all men's love for a story that He might teach the most profound aspects of God.
 - a) An example from the scripture is recorded in the Luke 15:1-32.
 - b) To show the heavenly Father's constant love for sinful men, Jesus tells the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the lost boy.
- C. Jesus sought to teach the individual.
 1. He was traveling, yet He won a soul on the way (John 4:4-7). To Him, one individual meant an opportunity.
 2. His method of approach was tactful and not offensive (John 4:7).

3. He would have been tired and hungry, yet He did not allow that to destroy the opportunity (John 4:8). He thought first of the bread of life for a perishing soul.
 4. The opportunity seemed remote because she was a despised woman of a despised race (John 4:9).
 5. He did not turn away because the woman did not at first appreciate His meaning and purpose (John 4:9-15).
 6. He drove the truth home about both sin and God (John 4:16-18, 21-24).
 7. He convinced, convicted and won the woman until she became, in turn, one to bring many others to Him (John 4:19, 28-30).
 8. He used the incident to further prepare His disciples that they may convert souls (John 4:34-38).
- D. Jesus sought to teach the multitudes.
1. Jesus taught not only individuals effectively, but He also used His opportunities to instruct the multitudes as well.
 2. This fact is clearly set forth in the New Testament:
 - a) The multitude welcomed Him because they had been waiting to hear His teaching (Luke 8:40).
 - b) Many thousands gathered to hear the Lord's words in Luke 12:1.
 - c) Jesus taught the multitude in the Temple at the Feast of Booths (John 7:14).
 - d) While Jesus was on the Mount of Olives, many came to hear Him (John 8:2).
- E. Jesus trained others to carry out the work which He began.
1. Jesus took particular pains to choose and instruct men to carry on the work of evangelism (John 17:18; 20:21).
 2. Instructing and encouraging members to teach the gospel is just as important today in building up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-12).

II. ***The Work Of The Inspired Followers Of Jesus***

- A. They revealed the word of God for us.
1. These men were especially chosen, equipped and guided to give the gospel to the world in the day when the New Testament was not yet fully revealed (John 16:12-13).
 - a) They were baptized with the Holy Spirit and given special powers to work miracles as credentials of their appointment (Acts 1:8; Hebrews 2:1-4).
 - b) They spoke and were directly guided by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:9-13; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21).

2. They unlocked the kingdom, preached the gospel and revealed once and for all the gospel terms of pardon and the conditions of Christian life, conduct, service and reward. When we follow this word that they revealed, we are indirectly guided by the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16-26).

B. Noteworthy points of their ministry.

1. They did not allow the fact that they were inspired lessen their heroic, persistent and personal efforts. One only has to read of Peter's stern and public condemnation of Ananias and Sapphira's sin or Paul's courageous efforts on Mars Hill (Acts 5:1-11; 17:22-34), to know that these were servants who worked and sacrificed.
2. They were absolutely loyal to the commission under which they preached. Each and every one gave answer to the question, "What shall I do to be saved?" strictly according to the terms of the great commission (Acts 2:38).
3. They strictly adhered to the preaching of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior above all else (1 Corinthians 1:23; 2:2).

III. ***The Work To Be Done By His Inspired Followers***

A. The message and method.

1. The message that we teach is the same one that Christ and His apostles taught.
 - a) The Lord told the Jews that His body would be raised in three days and He told Pilate that He was to bear witness to the truth (John 2:19-21; 18:37).
 - b) Peter taught that there was salvation in no other but the Lord (Acts 4:10-12).
 - c) Paul said that Christ died, was buried and arose the third day for our sins (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).
 - d) John wrote what he did in order that we might believe in Him (John 20:30-31).
2. The method we use is also the same as the Lord and His apostles. They enlarged the borders of the kingdom by zealously using their talents and opportunities in teaching.
 - a) Most of the cases of conversion in the book of Acts is preceded by teaching (cf. Acts 2:14; 8:5, 35; 11:13-14; 16:14, 30-31; 18:8; 19:5).
 - b) People come to know God through teaching (John 6:44-45; Ephesians 1:13; Colossians 1-5-6, 23; 1 John 3:11).

B. Requirements of God's workers.

1. What kind of people ought we to be if we are to represent Him? If we are to be evangelists of Jesus, we must possess the same spirit

and passion as Christ and His apostles (Luke 19:10; Acts 5:29, 40-42).

2. Our task is to help men know God (Matthew 28:19-20). The messenger has much to do with the way the message is received (2 Timothy 2:24-26). The following characteristics of Christ are needed in every Christian who is going to help men know God:
 - a) Strength.
 - (1) A weak person will never spread the gospel. An effective converter of souls dare not be a weakling.
 - (2) Paul's charge to Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:1-2 requires strength. Cowardice has no place in the kingdom of God!
 - b) Knowledge.
 - (1) If we are experts in anything, I hope it is in God's word (Philippians 3:8).
 - (2) A great orator may manipulate a crowd, but it takes a teacher of God's word to make Christians (2 Timothy 2:15; 2 Peter 1:5-8).
 - c) Enthusiasm.
 - (1) It takes fire to start fire. If we want our hearers to be fervent, then we must be fervent (Acts 18:25; Romans 12:11).
 - (2) Jesus was so fervent that He was willing to die and convince a lost world (Matthew 20:28).
 - d) Holiness.
 - (1) No one is going to believe your call to a holy life if you cannot live it! With some, your greatest asset will be the way you conduct yourself.
 - (2) If you cannot live right, you have lost the battle for people's souls (1 Peter 1:14-16).
 - e) Humility.
 - (1) It is very easy to allow egotism to define our work rather than our humble submission to God's plan.
 - (2) We labor, but the results of the work are really the increase of God (1 Corinthians 3:6).
 - f) Honesty.
 - (1) Departure from the truth and compromise are the deadliest snares over which Christians will stumble (Romans 13:13; 1 Timothy 2:2).
 - (2) We must be forthright with the people whom we are trying to teach. The truth never fears investigation.
 - g) Confidence.
 - (1) Confidence is the opposite of doubt. We ought to go out with absolute confidence in God, in Christ, in the power of God's word and, last of all, with confidence in ourselves.

(2) Victories are seldom won by those who start out with their banners trailing in the dust. The one who does not confidently expect to convert souls will rarely succeed (Matthew 21:18-22). Faith, conviction and confidence go hand in hand.

Conclusion. We all bear His name and I hope we all love His cause. It is great to be a Christian; it is wonderful to be a messenger and evangelist for Jesus Christ. Who are we to refuse this noble work? Who are we to shrug and say, "It is the other person's responsibility?" Are we going to be of a better mind to teach and use our opportunities or will we let excuses slam the door on someone's salvation?

In the last great day it will be better to have been the humblest citizen in the humblest nation and have been a Christian, than to have been emperor of the proudest empire and have failed to be a Christian. Let us always be willing to share this glorious message and be attuned to the opportunities which come our way. If we are diligent in this task, God will send more our way to receive the water of life. Remember the Lord's admonition in John 4:35 that the fields are white unto the harvest. We can have a growing, vibrant congregation but we all must do our part to teach the lost.